



General Assembly

Seventy-first session

First Committee

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Boukadoum (Algeria)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda items 89 to 105 (continued)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under all disarmament and related international security agenda items

The Chair: The Committee will continue this morning with its thematic discussions on specific subjects and the introduction and consideration of draft resolutions and decisions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items. We still have 28 speakers on the list for the cluster on outer space (disarmament aspects).

However, before continuing with the speakers on that cluster, in accordance with its adopted timetable, the Committee will first hear a briefing by the Chair of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, Mr. Courtenay Rattray, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations. The report of the sixth Biennial Meeting is contained in document A/CONF.192/BMS/2016/2.

I would like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome Ambassador Rattray to the meeting. Immediately following his statement, owing to the long list of speakers remaining under the outer space cluster, the Committee will continue listening to statements on that cluster. I now give the floor to Mr. Rattray.

Mr. Rattray (Jamaica): It is an honour to brief the First Committee in my capacity as Chair of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The sixth Biennial Meeting, which took place in June this year, had a mandate to consider the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. It provided an important opportunity to strengthen the global framework on combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in the lead-up to the third Review Conference on the Programme of Action, which will take place here in New York in 2018.

In the run-up to the sixth Biennial Meeting, I held eight informal consultations, one of which was in Geneva. During the consultations we agreed on an agenda and worked on early versions of a possible draft outcome for the meeting. That early work ensured that we could present a more mature draft outcome document on the meeting's first day, which informed and advanced our deliberations as the meeting went on. Our informals also contributed to a successful final result of the meeting, reflected by the fact that its outcome document (A/CONF.192/BMS/2016/2) was adopted by consensus. While the outcome document encompasses a wide range of aspects relevant to the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, I would like to highlight seven of the meeting's most significant outcomes.

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First, the sixth Biennial Meeting acknowledged the link between the Programme of Action, its Tracing Instrument and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 and its related target 16.4. In addition, States noted that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons also has implications for the realization of several other Goals. In that context, the outcome document encourages States to take advantage of their reporting on implementation under the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument when reporting on other instruments, including progress made in implementing relevant Sustainable Development Goals and targets. In that regard, national reports submitted under the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument can now serve as a source for reporting progress on the SDGs. In that context, the sixth Biennial Meeting's outcome document also encourages all States, as well as the United Nations Centres for Disarmament, to provide assistance for building sustainable capacities to report on issues relating to small arms and light weapons. Upon its adoption in September 2015 (see A/70/PV.4), the 2030 Agenda formally linked security to development, and Member States at the sixth Biennial meeting acknowledged that important new alignment.

Secondly, the sixth Biennial Meeting considered recommendations from the second Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in 2015. Here, States agreed that recent developments in technologies for small arms and light weapons have the potential to affect the illicit trade in such weapons both positively and negatively. It was noted that a technological divide exists between countries and that new developments in such technologies affect States in different ways. There was general agreement on the need to ensure that the international community remains well prepared to address emerging challenges related to the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. In that regard, the sixth Biennial Meeting's outcome document stresses the importance of considering the implications of recent developments in the manufacturing, technology and design of small arms and light weapons for the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, and their respective implications for adequate assistance. To that end, the sixth Biennial Meeting recommended that those themes be included

for consideration at the Third Review Conference in 2018.

Thirdly, the sixth Biennial Meeting emphasized the role of subregional and regional organizations and organized an informal panel to hear views from regional organizations on their work. Areas of particular interest included regional focal points, synergies with other instruments, the provision of assistance for the development of national action plans, and the alignment of regional meetings with the global cycle. In addition, their ideas were solicited on issues for consideration at the third Review Conference. States were also urged to enhance their financial contributions to United Nations regional centres.

Fourthly, the States agreed on stronger gender-related paragraphs, including a call to take account of the different impacts of illicit small arms and light weapons on women, men, girls and boys; the promotion of women's meaningful participation in related policymaking, planning and information; the encouragement of sex-disaggregated data collection and serious consideration of increasing funding for gender-sensitive programmes.

Fifthly, States emphasized once again the important role of international cooperation and continued and sustainable assistance for fully and effectively implementing the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. The outcome document therefore urges States that are in a position to do so to provide capacity-building as well as equipment and financial and technical assistance.

Sixthly, States considered new dimensions that are having an effect on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The outcome document includes provisions on the illegal reactivation of deactivated weapons, as well as challenges posed by the illicit trade online of small arms and light weapons.

The seventh and final point I wish to highlight is that opinions differed on including direct references to ammunition and the Arms Trade Treaty in the outcome document. I must acknowledge that at times the negotiations were hard fought. However, I am pleased to be able to say that consensus language was achieved and included in the document. To that end, paragraph 9, on ammunition, acknowledges that some States apply relevant provisions of the Programme of Action to materials other than the International Tracing Instrument's definition of small arms and light

weapons, while recognizing that other States are of the view that such materials are outside its scope. In addition, paragraph 36 encourages States to take into account complementarities between the Programme of Action and relevant subregional, regional and global instruments in which Member States participate, including ones that are legally binding.

I have attempted to capture the main outcomes of the sixth Biennial Meeting as I see them. It is crucial to ensure that the provisions we have negotiated and agreed on this year are considered and implemented if we wish to make tangible progress in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We as States must take the necessary steps in that direction, and the outcome document provides us with a blueprint for moving forward. At the international level, it is now up to Member States to use the outcome of the sixth Biennial Meeting to feed into the Third Review Conference. If we want it to be progressive and meaningful, preparations must start now.

Before concluding my briefing, I would like to add a final point, highlighting the positive contributions made by civil society during the sixth Biennial Meeting. Bringing ideas and on-the-ground experiences to the Programme of Action process is vital to its success. They serve as a reminder to us all of the humanitarian and developmental impacts of the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons. Taken together, the United Nations Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument continue to constitute an important global framework at our disposal for tackling the complex issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Let us continue to put the greatest possible effort into taking concrete steps to implement them.

The Chair: I thank Mr. Rattray for his briefing.

The Committee will now resume its consideration of the cluster on outer space (disarmament aspects). Once again, I urge all delegations to kindly observe the time limits of five minutes when speaking in a national capacity and seven minutes when speaking on behalf of a group. The Committee will continue to use the buzzer to remind delegations when they have reached the time limit.

Mr. Suárez Moreno (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am speaking today on behalf of the States members of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

The members of UNASUR have a common interest in promoting and expanding the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes that can benefit all States and are in the interests of humankind. The world we live in is greatly dependent on resources found in space that provide essential services in various areas. The members of UNASUR believe that equitable cooperation is essential to transferring and developing space technology so as to develop national capacities in the area and create opportunities for using science and technology to achieve sustainable and inclusive development.

We must also ensure equal access to the peaceful uses of outer space if we are to reap benefits for all humankind. In that connection, UNASUR members see cooperation as key for countries of the region and something that should be promoted as a fundamental pillar of the peaceful uses of outer space. We are therefore committed to improving the multilateral legal framework regulating a peaceful, secure and protected environment in outer space, and to do that, preventing an arms race in outer space is urgent. UNASUR believes that it is in the interests of the international community to begin negotiations on a legally binding instrument to prevent the placement of weapons of any kind in outer space. It is widely acknowledged that we will be courting imminent danger if we cannot establish a legal basis adequate to tackling the problem of arms in outer space. In that context, Russia and China's revised proposal for a treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space is a positive development in the efforts to launch negotiations.

I should remind the Committee that the prevention of an arms race in outer space has been on our agenda for a long time. It has been more than 30 years since the General Assembly, at its first special session on disarmament, asked the Conference on Disarmament to consider the issue of preventing such an arms race. Since then, despite various concrete exchanges on the issue that occurred between 1985 and 1994, a lack of consensus has prevented the Conference from giving this fundamental issue due attention.

The members of UNASUR believe that the adoption of transparency and confidence-building measures can promote mutual understanding, political dialogue and cooperation among States. We therefore reiterate our support for the report (see A/68/189) of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space

Activities established under resolution 65/68. We are grateful that the Group recognized that transparency and confidence-building measures in outer-space activities can serve as a foundation for considering concepts and proposals that can result in legally binding obligations.

We welcome the draft resolutions on the prevention of an arms race in outer space (A/C.1/71/L.3) and the commitment to not being the first country to place weapons in outer space (A/C.1/71/L.18), which are important confidence-building measures in this area, and we note that some States in our region have made political commitments in that regard. However, while UNASUR welcomes such political commitments and voluntary agreements, we reiterate that they cannot take the place of legally binding measures with firm, long-term obligations for all States.

UNASUR also followed with interest last year's deliberations on creating an international code of conduct for outer-space activities, sponsored by the European Union. While we value the European Union's work, we continue to believe that for the initiative to be effective and legitimate it will need a proper focus and mandate. In view of our ongoing concern about the possibility of an arms race in space, we once again urge all States members of the Conference on Disarmament to create the conditions necessary for the speedy approval of a programme of work that includes establishing a working group on the prevention of such an arms race that could lay the groundwork for negotiating a legally binding instrument preventing the placement of weapons in outer space. We will need political will to overcome that challenge.

Mr. Teo (Singapore): I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) — Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam and my own country, Singapore.

ASEAN recognizes that outer space is a domain relevant to a broad spectrum of human activities, including navigation, communications and commerce. We are convinced that space technology and its applications provide indispensable tools for viable long-term solutions to many of the world's development challenges and for helping to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

ASEAN would like to make a number of points in relation to the discussion on outer space.

First, we recognize that the exploration and use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes are for the benefit of all humankind. It is vital to prevent an arms race in outer space. In that regard, we should build consensus on norms that encourage the peaceful use of space as a global commons for the benefit of all States. Greater international collaboration is required, and ASEAN supports efforts to strengthen the governance framework of outer space. An appropriate multilateral framework on rules of behaviour in outer space represents a possible avenue for addressing the issue. ASEAN notes with appreciation the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (see A/68/189), and reaffirms the importance of transparency and confidence-building measures in fostering mutual trust and reducing the risk of miscommunication.

Secondly, ASEAN welcomes activities and dialogue that deepen understanding on issues pertaining to space security. In particular, we would like to highlight the contributions made by our series of ASEAN regional forum space-security workshops, and we appreciated the efforts of Laos, China, Russia and the United States in co-hosting the most recent of them in November 2015 in Beijing. ASEAN also looks forward to the fourth in the series, to be held in Singapore on 24 and 25 October and co-hosted by Singapore and the United States. It will be another opportunity for comprehensive, balanced exploration of critical issues, including space-security threats and hazards, transparency and confidence-building measures for enhancing space security and areas for practical international cooperation.

Thirdly, ASEAN appreciates the opportunities that have been provided for capacity-building in space science and technology, particularly for member States with fledgling space capabilities. On that note, we welcomed the announcement on 27 September by the United Nations Office of Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) of the first dedicated United Nations space mission aimed at giving developing countries an opportunity to develop and fly microgravity payloads for an extended duration in orbit. We also welcome the recent opening of the second round of applications for the United Nations-Japan Cooperation Programme on CubeSat Deployment from the International Space

Station Japanese Experiment Module initiative, a capacity-building initiative launched by UNOOSA and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency that offers developing countries the opportunity to develop cube satellites from the International Space Station.

Fourthly, ASEAN recognizes that the steadily increasing interest in space brings with it a series of challenges that must be tackled as soon as possible. In particular, we are concerned about the issue of space debris, which poses a serious risk to communications and all nations, peoples, and industries that rely heavily on their use. ASEAN encourages States that have not yet done so to consider voluntary implementation of the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. We also urge the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to continue discussions on measures to mitigate space debris.

Pragmatic cooperation among all parties is required to ensure that space remains secure and sustainable. The joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees (see A/C.1/70/PV.13) held during the seventieth session of the General Assembly to discuss possible challenges to space security and sustainability was a welcome development. ASEAN welcomes the proposal to hold a second such meeting at the Assembly's seventy-second session, thereby helping to enhance synergy between the First and Fourth Committees. ASEAN stands ready to play its part and to further contribute to the discussion on outer space, a domain that affects the future of all humankind.

Mr. Ben Sliman (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would first like to express the support of the Group of Arab States for the statement delivered previously by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/71/PV.14).

The Arab Group is firmly convinced of the importance of the peaceful use of outer space. The international legal agreements aimed at ending the weaponization of outer space have played an important and very positive role in promoting its peaceful use and organizing activities taking place there. We would like to reaffirm the priorities on which the Arab Group bases its approach in this context.

First, we have to take into consideration the fact that outer space is the common property and heritage of humankind. Every human activity that takes place in outer space must be dealt with under the proper

auspices — that is, of the United Nations — in order to guarantee the principles of universality and respect for the various relevant legal instruments.

Secondly, any attempt or proposal to organize or regulate outer-space activities, whether through an international code of conduct or a future treaty designed to prevent the weaponization of space, should aim to promote an outer-space regime that benefits every country and does not restrict the inalienable right of all States to be able to access the peaceful use of outer space.

Thirdly, the Arab Group stresses the importance of maintaining outer space as an entirely peaceful domain free of conflict, and that means preventing the placement there of any weapons, defensive or otherwise, and any kind of arms race. We call for deliberations on a suitable international mechanism for preventing the use of arms in outer space.

Fourthly, we would like to affirm the importance of opening up access to technology transfer in this area with a view to promoting the necessary technical cooperation and providing relevant technical aid and assistance, with developed countries helping developing countries to create such technical capacities in order to ensure that they too can benefit from outer-space activities.

In conclusion, the Arab Group is happy to support all initiatives and proposals relating to space security that take into consideration the four priorities that I have just outlined, affirm the peaceful nature of outer space and emphasize its disarmament and demilitarization.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Ms. Kőrömi (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

The European Union and its member States continue to promote the preservation of a safe and secure space environment and the peaceful use of outer space on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis. The EU recognizes outer space as a global common good to be used for the benefit of all humankind.

The EU and its member States are increasingly important users of outer space. The EU has developed two ambitious space programmes, Galileo and Copernicus, that complement national space programmes and provide services free of charge that have the potential to contribute to realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals. The EU also benefits from other European space programmes of its member States and the European Space Agency. European space actors are also increasingly engaging in international cooperation to help other countries mobilize space for sustainable development.

Later this year, the EU will adopt a new space strategy that will set out Europe's ambitions in space and confirm that we remain an active and globally engaged partner. Based on the values and principles enshrined in United Nations treaties, the EU will work alongside its member States and partners to promote and protect the sustainable and peaceful use of space by all nations.

Recent years have seen a considerable increase in the use of outer space, with a corresponding increase in orbital debris and potentially destructive collisions. The existing governance frameworks and rules designed to ensure that all nations can use space sustainably are under increasing strain. The growing numbers of space actors, including private companies, are placing more and more objects in space, but are adhering to different standards. The number of objects in space is sharply increasing. The international regulatory environment no longer suffices. We need new common principles and long-term responses if we are to preserve the integrity of the space environment. The European Union therefore calls for increased international cooperation aimed at helping us to establish agreed-on standards of responsible behaviour in outer space. The European Union's new global strategy will affirm that commitment.

We remain convinced that transparency and confidence-building measures can make an important contribution to the security, safety and sustainability of activities in outer space so as to preserve the integrity of the space environment for all, which is why some years ago the EU proposed an international code of conduct for outer-space activities. We believe that a non-legally binding agreement negotiated within the United Nations could be a way to proceed.

Globally shaped principles of responsible behaviour across the full range of space activities should serve our long-term goals, which include increasing international cooperation in space, committing mutually to non-interference in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, facilitating equitable access to outer space and increasing transparency in the conduct of space activities. The EU and its member States will continue to show commitment in those areas, which are important to our security and prosperity.

One very important aspect of sustainability is the work that has been done by the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. We commend the Working Group's members and Chair for their excellent work and the tangible progress they have achieved. In June, the Committee broadly agreed to move ahead with a first set of guidelines, while asking the Working Group to continue to consider the remaining guidelines. Further progress was made at the Working Group's intersessional meeting in September. The EU and its member States welcome those positive developments and will continue to support the process fully.

Preventing an arms race in outer space, and preventing outer space from becoming an area of conflict is essential to safeguarding the long-term use of the space environment for peaceful purposes. The EU remains firmly committed to preventing an arms race in outer space, and last year, therefore, all EU member States voted in favour of resolution 70/26, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In our view, the updated draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.3, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer-space objects does not represent an appropriate basis for substantive work in the Conference on Disarmament on the issue. A new, legally binding instrument will have to be comprehensive, effective and verifiable. Regarding the initiative on no first placement of weapons in outer space (A/C.1/71/L.18), we are equally concerned about the fact that it does not adequately respond to the objective of strengthening trust and confidence between States.

The draft resolution on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer-space activities (A/C.1/71/L.19), which is sponsored by all European Union member States and traditionally adopted by consensus, demonstrates the international community's

shared sense of urgency and responsibility for preserving outer space for peaceful use by all humankind. The European Union will spare no effort in that regard and stands ready to work with all States Members of the United Nations to advance space security and space governance.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): The United States continues its long-standing commitment to ensuring the long-term sustainability, stability, safety and security of the space environment. Addressing the challenges of orbital congestion, the avoidance of collisions, and responsible and peaceful behaviour in space are the responsibilities of all engaged in space activities. How we address those challenges is an important question for discussion within the First Committee, as well as in the Conference on Disarmament and elsewhere.

In considering options for international cooperation to ensure space security and sustainability, some States continue to pursue efforts to achieve legally binding arms-control agreements that are unlikely to be timely, equitable or effective. For reasons that we have raised many times, the United States is convinced that such an approach does not satisfactorily address our fundamental concerns and cannot form the basis for negotiations in Geneva. Rather, we believe that many of the outer-space challenges we face today could be addressed through practical, near-term approaches such as non-legally binding transparency and confidence-building measures and the development of norms or standards of responsible behaviour in space. They bring the advantages of improving awareness, increasing transparency among States and encouraging responsible actions in outer space as well as its peaceful use.

Consistent with that view, we have encouraged the international community to consider the recommendations made by the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities in its 2013 consensus report (see A/68/189). Together with Russia and China, we have sponsored resolutions 68/50, 69/38 and 70/53, all endorsed by the Assembly, encouraging Member States to review and implement to the greatest extent practicable, on a voluntary basis and through relevant national mechanisms, the transparency and confidence-building measures proposed in the Group's report, and we are a sponsor of a similar draft resolution (A/C.1/71/L.19) this year.

Resolution 70/53 also asked the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly, at its seventy-second session, a report on the United Nations system's coordination of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer-space activities, with an annex containing Member States' submissions of their views. Over the past two years, the United States has provided its views on how to make practical use of the Group's recommendations to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and to the Conference on Disarmament, in the context of those bodies' ongoing work. We encourage others to provide their views to the Secretary-General ahead of the seventy-second session. In addition, we would welcome informal discussions on the issue in 2017 within the Disarmament Commission, and would also support discussion of the topic at the joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees next year, as proposed by COPUOS. I would like to point out that the United States was pleased to join the consensus on the June COPUOS report (A/71/20), which included agreement on a first set of guidelines on long-term sustainability.

The report of the Group of Governmental Experts also established criteria for developing outer-space transparency and confidence-building measures. In applying them, United States experts, along with a number of the governmental experts from other countries, have noted that some of the proposals, such as Russia's initiative calling on States to make declarations of no first placement of weapons in outer space, do not satisfy the criteria. The proponents of the initiative do not adequately explain how it would be consistent with those criteria. They have also failed to explain how it would enhance stability in space when it is silent on the most pressing threat to outer-space systems — terrestrially based anti-satellite weapons.

I would like to conclude by repeating our long-standing position, which is that if we are serious about sustaining the outer-space environment for future generations, we must address the challenges that we face today by working together to develop and implement pragmatic measures.

Ms. McCarney (Canada): Outer-space activities play an increasing and undeniably critical role in the lives of all of us across the globe. At the same time, the increasing volume and complexity of outer-space activities create challenges to its exploration and use for peaceful purposes. It is therefore in the interest of

all countries to create a safe, sustainable and secure outer-space environment.

Canada applauds efforts to implement transparency and confidence-building measures in outer-space activities, as recommended in the 2013 report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (see A/68/189), and we look to all States to promptly implement its recommendations. Effective measures of this type help to solidify international norms in outer space, creating greater mutual understanding and reducing tension. They offer pragmatic and near-term steps for increasing information-sharing between States, reducing miscalculations and building overall confidence among all States regarding the peaceful use of outer space. By building increased trust and openness in the space environment, we create the climate necessary to develop future legally binding measures governing it.

Canada welcomed last year's joint meeting of the First and Fourth Committees (see A/C.1/70/PV.13), which was a first step towards addressing outer-space issues holistically. We also welcome the recommendations by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) to convene a subsequent joint meeting in 2017 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the important Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. That meeting must, however, make the transition from symbolic to practical work and we, as the international community, must plan early and seize every opportunity to further explore the intersections between the work of the two Committees. We must also foster practical coordination and communication between the disarmament and civilian space communities, since a single meeting every two years cannot on its own serve the purposes of the international community's holistic treatment of space.

(spoke in French)

Canada remains committed to engaging with other States to advance efforts to maintain a safe, predictable and sustainable outer-space environment. We recognize the importance of addressing threats caused by space debris, space weather and near-Earth objects, such as asteroids, that threaten the space-based infrastructure that provides daily essential services to humankind. We therefore welcome the recent adoption by COPUOS

of a first set of voluntary guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space and urge space-faring nations to implement them. Canada has the honour of chairing the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in 2016 and 2017, and we will continue to participate actively in finalizing the second set of voluntary guidelines and the resulting compendium to be submitted for adoption by the General Assembly in 2018. The compendium will help to strengthen behavioural norms for outer-space activities and ensure that we can continue to use space to humankind's socioeconomic benefit.

Another priority of Canada's 2016-2017 chairmanship is contributing to the successful marking of the fiftieth anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which will enable us to position COPUOS for the next decade and will be an important contribution to ensuring that the international community can take into account the rapidly changing and increasingly complex issues facing it as we seek to ensure that all of humankind can benefit from outer space.

In conclusion, as the international community continues to work to ensure that outer space does not become a theatre of conflict, we urge States to refrain from destabilizing activities such as the development or testing of anti-satellite weapon systems and to clearly signal their intentions and act responsibly, especially with regard to limiting space debris.

Ms. Guitton (France) *(spoke in French)*: France aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the European Union, and I would like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

France is committed to preserving the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. Space is instrumental to our economies and our societies and to many daily applications, particularly in areas such as telecommunications, land, air and sea navigation, meteorology and climate. In France's view, therefore, our main goals are ensuring the long-term sustainability and security of space activities, which are fundamental to the economic growth and development of an ever-increasing number of countries. We must prevent conditions in space from deteriorating so that as many people as possible can benefit from its uses, particularly in developing countries, and preserve access to space for future generations. We can only achieve that goal together.

The space environment is steadily deteriorating. Regrettably, there are a number of challenges to it, including the growing proliferation of space debris and the increase in risks of collision or interference that are the result of the growing number of objects launched into space. Unfortunately, they can also be caused by intentional acts such as the deliberate destruction of space objects, which can result in a huge amount of debris. Given those challenges, our priority should be ensuring the viability and security of space activities.

France believes that all action on the part of the international community should be based on several key principles. First, space activities should be developed in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which provide an appropriate and adequate framework. Secondly, the approach should be a cross-cutting one that takes into account the dual nature of space activities. We should promote the principle of the responsible use of space for both civilian and military space programmes. Thirdly, our actions should be effective, pragmatic and able to provide concrete and readily measurable benefits, which should also be sustainable. Lastly, they should be part of a more comprehensive framework for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Measures aimed at increasing confidence and transparency among stakeholders and limiting potential misunderstandings and escalations are naturally part of this objective. That is why France promotes the adoption of transparency and confidence-building measures, as well as standards aimed at guiding stakeholders' behaviour in outer space. The added value of this type of measure was noted in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (see A/68/189), which was adopted by consensus in 2014 and in which France participated fully.

Several initiatives aimed at preventing the first placement of weapons in outer space have been put forward in the Conference on Disarmament and the First Committee. France notes and shares the concerns that have been expressed about their effectiveness. While we are not necessarily opposed to legal approaches, France supports proposals that can be implemented immediately, given the rapidly deteriorating outer-space environment and the urgent need for a response to the problem.

Lastly, France welcomes the June adoption by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space of a first set of 12 guidelines on the long-term sustainability of outer space, to be implemented immediately, and is open to holding similar discussions in the Conference on Disarmament on aspects that come under its mandate, within the framework of a balanced programme of work.

The Chair: I call on the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.19.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We have all seen that the number of issues related to ensuring the the security of outer-space activities has increased as the number of States actively participating in the development of outer space has grown. This undermining of the security of activities in outer space has less to do with the increasing density and intensity of outer-space operations and more with a much more serious factor, which is one particular State's desire to maintain a free hand for itself in outer space and its reluctance to respond openly and responsibly to the question of whether weapons will be deployed in outer space tomorrow or not.

What this is about, therefore, as we all know, is the possibility of placing military hardware in outer space or threatening or using force against objects in outer space belonging to other States, on the pretext of protecting their own national interests or outer-space property. There can be no arguing with the fact that the whole algorithm for building an international architecture for long-lasting, reliably secure outer-space activities is entirely dependent on the nature of the response to the direct question of whether there will be weapons in outer space tomorrow or not.

Russia has consistently supported equal access to outer space for all States, without exception, for the use of outer space for peaceful purposes and in full, unconditional compliance with all the provisions on the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. We will never agree to an ideology that enshrines the domination of space by a single State or group of States. We should have no illusions about the fact that sooner or later, the logic behind such an ideology would inevitably lead to some States making a reality of their plans to deploy weapons in outer space.

In this twenty-first century, it is vital to ensure that there will never be a repeat of the disaster of the previous one, when one State dropped atomic bombs

on two Japanese cities and in doing so unleashed a nuclear arms race that only through superhuman effort have we ultimately succeeded in preventing and thereby avoiding a twentieth-century catastrophe. Thanks to those efforts, it was avoided. As responsible States of this twenty-first century, we should now take preventive measures and make sure that there will be no new catastrophic military events in space.

It is essential that we develop an international legally binding instrument with reliable guarantees against the placement of weapons in outer space and the use or threat of force both in and from outer space. The basis for such an instrument should be the Russian-Chinese draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against outer-space objects. As we know, the Conference on Disarmament has been considering an updated version of the treaty since June 2014.

I wish to draw critics' attention to the fact that the draft treaty already contains responses to practically all the questions that they have asked. It includes both a definition of weapons in outer space and guarantees for refraining from the use of outer space weaponry. If anyone dares say otherwise, that simply means that he or she has not actually read the treaty text and is simply dealing in groundless demagoguery. We should all launch negotiations on the draft treaty as soon as possible as part of a balanced programme of work at the Conference on Disarmament. We must not let this historic opportunity go by but work quickly to establish a reliable shield against the potential threat of the appearance of weapons in outer space before it leads to disaster.

Prior to the conclusion of talks on the draft treaty and its entry into force, we believe it is essential to take effective political measures to keep outer space free of weaponry. Central to those efforts is the draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space (A/C.1/71/L.3) that the Committee traditionally adopts and which, as the Committee is aware, is annually submitted either by Egypt or Sri Lanka. Russia firmly supports it and is one of its sponsors. Today, besides that draft resolution, the only truly effective measures for preventing an arms race is the multilateral initiative on a political commitment to no first placement of weapons in outer space. If we all undertake that commitment, we will have dealt with the issue of the prevention of an arms race in outer space on the political front. No State will deploy weapons in

outer space, whether as first, second, fifth or tenth. If anyone claims not acknowledge this, or simply does not want to, it would give rise to serious doubt as to the sincerity of the approach and intentions of that State or group of States with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security.

With regard to the commitment to no first placement, 14 States are full-fledged participants. We welcome Bolivia and Nicaragua's decision to join in 2016. The draft resolution (A/C.1/71/L.18) on the subject that we are submitting for what is now the third year represents a call to take part in that responsible dialogue, and we urge all States to support it. The substance of the no-first-placement initiative is a political commitment by responsible States to refrain from starting an arms race in space. It represents inter-State responsibility and mutual trust in their highest form and will be a key factor in preventing the weaponization of outer space. We hope that it will be taken up on a global level and will unite all States who care about preserving outer space as a place of peace.

To save time, I will not discuss the issues of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer-space activities and the work that has been done by the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space Activities and the United Nations Disarmament Commission. I think we all know what is going on in that area. Our efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space are fundamental to finding solutions to every other problem having to do with security in outer-space operations. To enable us to get started, I once again urge all responsible States to display the necessary political will, without hiding behind the fig leaf of space debris, and to answer one direct and specific question. Will they at a point in the future deploy weapons in outer space or not?

Mr. Islam (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier on this agenda item by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/71/PV.14).

The ever-expanding use of space technology and services in our socioeconomic development efforts has raised the stakes for us in promoting the safety, security and long-term sustainability of outer-space activities. We subscribe to the fundamental premise of the Outer Space Treaty, which is that the exploration and use of

outer space shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interest of all countries and shall be the province of all humankind.

Bangladesh has consistently advocated for the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In the Conference on Disarmament, we continue to underscore the importance of substantive discussions on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and have registered our support for commencing negotiations, under an agreed programme of work, on the draft treaty, introduced by the Russian Federation and China in June 2014, on no first placement of weapons in outer space and on preventing any threat or use of force against outer-space objects. In the same spirit, we will once again be a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.3, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", in the First Committee.

As an aspiring spacefaring nation with its first communications satellite, *Bangobandhu I*, named for the honorific title of the father of our nation, projected to be launched into orbit by the end of next year, Bangladesh notes with some concern the growing congestion, contention and competition in outer space and the consequent possibilities for compromising outer-space security. We therefore stress the importance of developing a universal, non-discriminatory, international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, building on the existing legal regime relating to disarmament, arms control and the use of outer space. We share others' concerns about developments in anti-ballistic-missile technology, in particular, that aggravate the potential for the weaponization of outer space to the detriment of the interests of space stakeholders and users alike. As a State party to the Outer Space Treaty, Bangladesh is also working on its possible accession to other relevant international treaties on the exploration and use of outer space.

We recognize that the critical importance of various transparency- and confidence-building measures are complementary to the existing international legal framework pertaining to outer-space activities rather than a substitute for it. We refer to the useful recommendations on potential outer-space transparency and confidence-building measures contained in the report (see A/68/189) of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, formed pursuant

to resolution 65/68, as a useful basis for further work in that regard. Among other issues, Bangladesh considers the joint panel discussion between the First and Fourth Committees proposed for 2017 to be a step in the right direction. We stress that any codification initiative concerning outer-space activities, even when focusing on specific areas, should be undertaken in a comprehensive and inclusive manner in order to take the various concerns about it into account.

Alongside disarmament efforts in outer space, we should direct sustained attention and effort to the issue of debris mitigation through effective international cooperation. In view of the alarming concentrations of debris in outer space and the threat it poses to space objects and activities, it is critical that meaningful initiatives be taken to tackle the challenge with the involvement of all States, logically based on a common but differentiated approach. The major space actors that are mainly responsible for polluting the outer-space environment to date should also take on themselves the added responsibility of making this expanding frontier for human endeavour safe and sustainable.

Ms. Janjua (Pakistan): Pakistan aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier on this cluster by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) (see A/C.1/71/PV.14).

Since outer space is part of the common heritage of humankind, it is in the common interests of humankind to explore and use it for peaceful purposes. Space must remain peaceful. It should not be militarized or weaponized. For three decades, the international community has worked to prevent the weaponization of outer space. But it is not science fiction any more. Weapons in space could intensify wars. Measures must be taken to prevent an arms race in outer space if we are to avoid the grave dangers it would present to global peace and security.

We particularly share NAM's concerns about the negative implications of the development and deployment of anti-ballistic-missile (ABM) systems and the pursuit of advanced military technologies capable of being deployed in outer space. The Conference on Disarmament (CD) has long been seized of that issue, as has the General Assembly. ABM systems are inherently destabilizing and of dubious effectiveness, and they can have wide-ranging implications for regional and international security and stability. We must redouble our efforts to formulate a comprehensive, universal and

non-discriminatory agreement that addresses concerns about the development, deployment and proliferation of ABM systems. The effects of their introduction could be devastating for sensitive regions such as ours.

The rapid growth and change in space technologies has widened gaps in the existing international regimes pertaining to outer space, including the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 and the 1979 Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. While the Outer Space Treaty prohibits the placement of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in outer space, it is silent on the deployment of other types, including conventional weapons. Those gaps should be filled by a new legal instrument. It is against that backdrop that Pakistan and the NAM member States have called for negotiations on a binding treaty in the CD on this contemporary issue of interest and concern.

There is a considerable body of existing knowledge on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Much work was done on it between 1985 and 1992 by the ad hoc committees in the CD. The treaty on the subject drafted by China and Russia and updated in 2014 is a useful basis for commencing negotiations. We see no impediment to starting negotiations on an issue that is so important to international peace and security. The States opposing such negotiations are trying to protect their monopoly of such technology and maintain their full-spectrum dominance. It is ironic that some States have found it convenient to attribute the stalemate in the CD to one of the four core issues on its agenda. The facts speak for themselves, and one inconvenient fact is that despite overwhelming support for negotiating a legal instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, a handful of States have prevented the CD from doing so.

We take note of the consensus report and recommendations of the last Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space (see A/68/189) and agree that such measures should be aimed at increasing the security, safety and sustainability of outer space. We particularly welcome the Group's recommendations for further developing international cooperation between space-faring and non-space-faring nations on the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of all States. We recognize the value of transparency and confidence-building measures as well as non-legally binding codes of conduct in promoting trust among

States, and have been participating actively in such efforts. We believe that such initiatives should be pursued in an inclusive, universal and participatory manner within the United Nations system, taking into account the interests of all States. However, such voluntary measures cannot substitute for legally binding, treaty-based obligations.

Pakistan is a sponsor of the annual resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, which continues to be adopted by an overwhelming majority, as well as of the laudable initiative contained in the draft resolution entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space" (A/C.1/71/L.18). We are party to all of the five core multilateral treaties governing the peaceful uses of outer space and stand ready to explore additional treaties that would contribute to preventing the weaponization of outer space. Pakistan is a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which plays an important role in maximizing the benefits of space capabilities in the service of humankind, particularly in the fields of the environment, health and disaster mitigation.

Pakistan considered the joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees held in October 2015 (see A/C.1/70/PV.13) to be a positive initiative and welcomes the decision to hold a follow-up meeting in 2017.

Mr. Sabarullah Khan (Sri Lanka): My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/71/PV.14).

It is in the common interest of humankind to explore and use outer space for peaceful purposes. Outer space is part of humankind's common heritage and we should all have an equal opportunity to explore it for the common benefit of humankind, irrespective of our level of economic or scientific development. Sri Lanka believes that space exploration and the utilization of outer space make invaluable contributions to the advancement of humankind. While space exploration offers abundant opportunities, it is incumbent on those who explore and use it to prevent outer space from becoming the site of an arms race.

With the increase in space activities, there are justifiable concerns that the space environment is gradually becoming congested. The potential militarization and weaponization of the space environment could be a prelude to the grave risk of outer space becoming a contested area and a source of

conflict. We have long held the view that preventing an arms race in outer space and ensuring that it is kept free of conflict are essential if we are to avert serious potential threats to international peace and security. We reaffirm our belief that outer space must not become another arena for an arms race, which would have dire consequences for humankind and pose a grave danger both to countries that have the technological capacity to launch orbital objects and those that do not. The placement of arms in outer space will not only threaten the security of outer space assets, it will also damage the Earth's biosphere. We call on all nations, especially those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the goal of ensuring the peaceful use of outer space and to refrain from pursuing actions that could turn outer space into an arena for an arms race.

It is vital to ensure that Member States strictly comply with the existing arms-limitation and disarmament agreements relevant to outer space and the existing legal regime governing the use of outer space. We believe that wide participation in the legal regime could also help to enhance its effectiveness. Given the drastic changes that have taken place in the political atmosphere with regard to the sustainability and security of outer space, we believe that the existing legal framework governing the use of outer space should be further strengthened.

It is our firm conviction that concluding an international agreement on the prevention of an arms race in outer space as soon as possible would definitely strengthen the existing legal framework. In that regard, we wish to emphasize our view of the central role that the Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, should play in negotiating such an agreement. We believe that it should commence its work in that regard without delay. Sri Lanka will give its full support to such an endeavour, as it has always supported initiatives aimed at preserving peace, preventing conflict and ensuring sustainability in the outer-space environment. In that context, I am pleased to inform the Committee that this year Egypt and Sri Lanka have once again submitted the draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space (A/C.1/71/L.3), which calls for negotiating a multilateral instrument in the Conference on Disarmament.

Sri Lanka remains committed to striving with all States and other stakeholders to make outer space a place free from conflict and prevent it from becoming an

arena for an arms race. We look forward to constructive deliberations during this thematic session.

Mr. Toro-Carnevali (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Venezuela associates itself with the statements made previously by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/71/PV.14) and by its own delegation earlier in today's meeting on behalf of the Union of South American Nations.

The sustained development of outer space offers humankind unlimited possibilities for progress in education, medicine, risk management, the prevention of natural disasters, agriculture, telecommunications, science and technology, among other things. That is why it is so important to work together to ensure the development of peaceful activities in outer space and avoid its militarization.

We should emphasize that an armed conflict in outer space could have devastating consequences for our lives on this planet and destroy the prospects for developing space activities and their potential for humankind. Unfortunately, such armed conflict is not as far-fetched as we might think. The development of satellites and other technologies for military purposes has increased. Some dual-use satellites that are used for telecommunications and the observation of Earth can be used — and sometimes are used — for less peaceful purposes. It is also a fact that some States have developed and tested anti-satellite systems and various missile-defence technologies that could be used to attack objects in outer space. In that regard, the potential militarization of outer space is increasingly worrying and its prevention and prohibition are increasingly urgent.

Venezuela welcomes the work done by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities. We take note of the European Union's proposal for a code of conduct for outer-space activities. Any initiative designed to promote transparency and confidence among States is a step in the right direction. However, none of them can replace a legally binding multilateral instrument, which is so urgently needed, to prevent the weaponization of outer space. In that regard, we stress how important it is that we make progress on negotiating a treaty on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, based on the 2014 draft treaty

introduced by Russia and China in the Conference on Disarmament.

In conclusion, we would like to reaffirm that the exploration and use of outer space provide opportunities for all nations, regardless of their degree of scientific or economic development, and should be the heritage of humankind. We must move forward together with the aim of strengthening the peaceful uses of outer space, and agree as soon as possible on a multilateral legally binding instrument that guarantees countries the possibility of a peaceful outer space from which all can benefit for the well-being and development of their peoples.

Mr. Masmеjeаn (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Many social, economic and security sectors rely on space systems in today's world. Outer space provides data, information and technological tools that contribute to sustainable development. Its use is therefore continually increasing, while useful orbits are becoming dangerously overcrowded. Thanks to technological advances, there are many more ways to attack space objects. Switzerland therefore believes that the international community should move forward on several tracks if it is to meet the challenges to stability and security in outer space, including paying special attention to the issue of enhancing transparency and confidence-building in the conduct of space activities through measures such as the prior notification of launches and changes in orbits. Sharing information and data on objects in orbit and on the development of military space programmes also helps to build confidence among States.

In that regard, the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (see A/68/189), submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, is an excellent starting point. Switzerland is pleased that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space included some of the Group of Governmental Experts' recommendations in a first set of guidelines on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, adopted this year. The Group's recommendations on the military uses of space should be taken into consideration by the various disarmament bodies. Switzerland also welcomes the study by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs of the implementation of the Group's recommendations by United Nations institutions, and looks forward

to receiving its report on the subject at the General Assembly's seventy-second session.

Protecting outer space from conflicts that could jeopardize its future use is another fundamental concern. In that regard, we think it is essential to ban the use of force against space systems and avoid any kind of arms race in space, for which we support the creation of an internationally binding instrument. The most developed proposal on this so far is the draft treaty submitted by Russia and China to the Conference on Disarmament on preventing the placement of weapons in outer space and the threat or use of force against outer space objects. However, many of its aspects need further development. In particular, Switzerland believes that if it is to be effective and to achieve its stated goals, it should also prohibit the development and testing of ground-based anti-satellite weapons.

With regard to the draft resolution on no first placement of weapons in outer space (A/C.1/71/L.18), Switzerland still doubts the effectiveness of such an approach in its current form. It says nothing about the development of such weapons. Furthermore, it could justify being the second to place weapons in outer space. We believe that this approach should be further developed and expanded in order to become an effective first step towards preventing an arms race in space.

As we can see, this is a complex issue. Multiple different approaches have been taken by a number of States and multilateral bodies. Some of those bodies are unable to fulfil their mandate, and yet the stakes are high. We must find ways to advance their work pragmatically. In view of various issues that seem impossible to resolve at this stage, we could for example attempt to reach agreement on basic standards of good conduct in space. In order to do that, it is crucial that the space and disarmament communities work hand in hand. The joint meeting of the First and Fourth Committees in 2015 (see A/C.1/70/PV.13) made it possible to have an initial exchange of views on the subject. We hope the round-table meeting of the two Committees planned for 2017 will enable us to define the next steps in an effective, efficient collaborative process.

Lastly, Switzerland is pleased that the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs have decided to work together more closely, in accordance with the recommendations of the Group of Governmental

Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities. We also welcome the prospect of the event organized jointly by the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research to be held in Geneva in 2017.

Mr. Mati (Italy): Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the European Union.

In the past few decades, Italy has been at the forefront of outer space activities. Since the launch of our first artificial satellite in outer space in 1954, we have developed our space capabilities in several areas, such as science, telecommunications and Earth observation. We have also contributed to the development of the International Space Station.

Today, space-based applications offer all of us unique resources for economic growth and innovation as well as for dealing with critical issues such as climate change and the management of natural disasters. That increasing reliance on space resources, infrastructures and activities makes it imperative that we work to prevent and mitigate the risks associated with inadequate traffic management, the creation of debris, harmful interferences and miscalculations and mistrust. For that, international cooperation is essential, which is why Italy is party to more than 60 bilateral agreements with both space-faring and developing countries, as well as to a majority of the international treaties on outer space. We support and actively participate in various regional and international organizations whose work is relevant to the development and peaceful use of outer space. Italy is a founding member State of the European Space Agency and has been a member of the Committee for the Peaceful Use of Outer Space (COPUOS) since it was established.

The sharply increasing number of objects in space is one of the major reasons why we should formulate and enforce a comprehensive and effective international regulatory environment. States must commit to enhancing humankind's well-being by working together for the long-term sustainability, safety and security of the space environment. Italy firmly believes that the effective implementation by all States concerned of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer-space activities — including those identified by the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities in its 2013 report (see A/68/189), later

endorsed by the Assembly — is a crucial step towards achieving greater safety, security and sustainability in outer-space activities.

Measures such as exchanges of information on States' space policies and activities, risk-reduction notifications and expert visits to national space facilities reduce the risks of misunderstandings and miscommunication. They help build mutual confidence and complement the existing legal international framework. Italy also welcomes the progress recently made on the guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer-space activities by the COPUOS Working Group established under its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. We are now looking forward to seeing constructive engagement on the part of all delegations with a view of finalizing that effort.

Italy remains fully committed to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. An arms race could turn outer space into an area of conflict, in contradiction to the objective of its long-term use for peaceful purposes. That is why we are one of the main advocates of the European Union's draft of an international code of conduct for outer-space activities as a first, non-legally binding step to complement other initiatives that could include a comprehensive, effective and verifiable legally binding instrument.

Despite the slowdown in negotiations, we still believe that a set of globally shared principles of responsible behaviour in outer space may be the most appropriate way to respond to the international community's shared sense of urgency. Such principles, which could lead subsequently to the formulation and adoption of a voluntary international code of conduct, should serve longer-term goals across the full range of space activities, including non-interference in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space; the prevention of the creation of debris; increased international cooperation in space; the preservation of the integrity of the space environment for all; equitable access to outer space; and increased transparency in the conduct of space exploration and exploitation activities. Italy fully supports those goals, and stands ready to contribute to achieving them.

Mr. Hansen (Australia): Modern society has become reliant on space for position, navigation, timing, communications, meteorological, Earth observation and other space-enabled services. That is particularly true for Australia. We rely on satellites to deliver telephone

and broadband Internet to our dispersed population. We also make extensive use of Earth-observation satellite data to monitor our water resources, land use and the severity of droughts and bushfires. Such space-enabled technologies are more cost-efficient and -effective than earlier terrestrial alternatives, and they are now within the financial reach of more countries and vital to development. Our own Asia-Pacific region has one of the fastest take-up rates for space-enabled technologies in the world.

But the right of all countries to have access to the global commons of space is coming under increasing threat from the proliferation of space debris. More than 500,000 pieces are currently tracked as they orbit the Earth. They travel fast enough for even a tiny object to damage a satellite or spacecraft and thereby create more space debris. The challenge of space debris is increasingly recognized as a pressing issue for our region. We applaud the continued efforts of the regional forums of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to raise awareness of the space debris challenge through their space-security workshops. Australia and Viet Nam initiated the process with an inaugural space-security workshop in Singapore in 2012, and Australia has engaged in subsequent workshops and will participate in a fourth in Singapore next week.

Australia has ongoing concerns about the development and testing of anti-satellite missiles. Such weapons have the potential to create vast amounts of space debris that can endanger the space assets and space-enabled services that all countries rely on. Even if they do not engage a target, their testing and deployment sends an unhelpful and potentially destabilizing message to the international community that is not conducive to international peace and cooperation in the space domain and runs counter to the international community's efforts to build transparency and confidence around space activities.

Any initiatives that seek to deal with the issue of the non-weaponization of space or to discourage the threat or use of force against space objects should include ground-based anti-satellite weapons in their scope. We see such weapons as the most pressing current threat to space infrastructure and consider initiatives that fail to address the issue to be seriously deficient. We urge the international community to focus on practical and achievable steps that we can take together to address the real threats to our space activities, particularly orbital debris.

It is important that we work together on the issue of space debris and take collective action. We could look to developing a legally binding treaty, but treaties take time and at present there is no treaty in prospect that addresses the threat of ground-based anti-satellite weapons. Alternatively, we can embrace immediate practical solutions to these issues, such as non-legally binding transparency and confidence-building measures. The value of such measures in outer space was recognized by the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, whose report (see A/68/189) was adopted without a vote by the General Assembly in July 2013.

Australia urges the international community to focus on practical and achievable steps that we can take together to address the real threats to our space activities, particularly orbital debris.

Mr. Abbani (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation is pleased to be speaking today on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We support the statements made previously by the representatives of Indonesia and Tunisia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of Arab States, respectively (see A/C.1/71/PV.14).

Outer space plays a key role in the economic, social and scientific sectors of many countries that the technological and scientific revolution has emphasized, and it is therefore important to establish conditions of security, transparency and confidence with regard to outer space activities. Like other countries, we want to use outer space well in order to help to meet our development needs. Outer space is the common heritage and property of humankind, and we have the right to explore and exploit it for exclusively peaceful purposes, thereby enabling us to consolidate peace, security and stability there and thereby enhance international cooperation through principles based on legislation and international commitments, as well as complying with the General Assembly's 1962 Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Uses of Outer Space and the 1967 Outer Space Treaty.

However, the weaponization of outer space is a source of concern, since such weapons pose a grave threat that could lead to an arms race whose consequences for international peace and security would be disastrous. In that regard, we would like to recall document

CD/2062, submitted by the Non-Aligned Movement to the Conference on Disarmament to explain its concerns about the pernicious effects of the development and deployment of anti-missile defence systems in outer space.

My country believes that the current legal system on outer space creates contradictions, since it does not provide enough guarantees to stop a potential arms race. We should therefore work together to strengthen the current framework of the Conference on Disarmament in order to improve that legal system. We therefore welcome the Chinese-Russian initiative on no first placement of weapons in outer space and the prevention of the threat or use of force against outer-space objects. We also welcome the General Assembly's adoption of resolutions 70/26 and 70/27 in that regard, as well as resolution 70/53, which contains important recommendations based on the report (see A/68/189) of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities.

In conclusion, we have taken note of the European Union proposal on a draft code of conduct for improving the transparency and rationalization of outer-space activities. I should point out that all such voluntary measures are represent a supplementary benefit but cannot replace what we need, which is a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Conference on Disarmament remains the appropriate platform for that.

Mr. Mra (Myanmar): I am pleased to have this opportunity to address the Committee on the disarmament aspects of outer space. My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered earlier today by the representatives of Singapore, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/71/PV.14).

I would like to reiterate that Myanmar recognizes outer space as the common heritage of humankind. Outer space activities should therefore be conducted solely for peaceful purposes and in the interests of all mankind. Each year, when we discuss this matter, many express concerns about the grave consequences that could arise from an arms race in outer space. We understand States' growing interest in exploring outer space for various reasons, since space technology is undergoing very rapid transformations. It is in the

nature of human beings to want to explore and learn. It was that curiosity that led humankind to land on the moon and begin to explore the universe. However, the militarization of outer space, should it occur, would not only threaten the security of many States but also undermine current disarmament initiatives.

We are of the view that States with major space-related activities, expertise and capabilities bear the primary responsibility for ensuring that we preserve the objective of the peaceful use of space as well as the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Enhancing transparency and confidence-building measures will help to prevent the militarization of outer space, and we therefore strongly encourage such measures in all their aspects.

My delegation continues to maintain its trust and confidence in the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament. We also share the view that the Conference should play the primary role in negotiating an agreement on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In the past, Myanmar has supported the two space-related resolutions in the United Nations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and on no first placement of weapons in outer space. We will continue to support those two important draft resolutions (A/C.1/71/L.3 and A/C.1/71/L.18) when the First Committee takes action on them in the coming days.

Mr. Mahfouz (Egypt): I would like to associate my delegation with the statements previously delivered on this cluster by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/71/PV.14), and Tunisia, on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

Egypt believes that it is a given that outer space is equally owned by all of humankind, which means that outer space is a common asset of humankind. Accordingly, all sorts of outer space activities have to be addressed under the auspices of the United Nations in order to be inclusive, universal and consensual. In this view, the Conference on Disarmament is the most appropriate and relevant international forum.

We reiterate that any regulations of outer space should aim to improve the outer space environment for the use of all States and should not in any way aim to limit the full utilization of outer space activities, applications and explorations by any other State. In fact, that is exactly the essence of the Treaty on Principles

Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies of 1967. We also reaffirm that outer space must remain free of any potential conflicts and should be recognized as a non-conflict zone. Therefore, we believe that the weaponization of outer space by any State for any purpose, whether it be offensive or defensive, must be prevented globally. That is precisely why Egypt and Sri Lanka introduced their traditional draft resolution entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" (A/C.1/71/L.3), which has been submitted to the First Committee on an annual basis for more than two decades. Indeed, as always, we seek the traditional support of the international community for such a vital resolution.

As an emerging spacefaring nation and a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Egypt urges the international community to make relevant technical assistance and technological exchange available and fully accessible to all countries of the world, irrespective of their scientific and economic levels of development, simply because international cooperation in this regard is vital and essential.

In conclusion, Egypt will work in full collaboration with the relevant bodies dealing with outer space activities in the African Union and the League of Arab States in order to achieve the aforementioned objectives with respect to securing outer space and utilizing it for peaceful purposes.

Ms. Yang Jia (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): As a result of the rapid development of space technology and the growing number of spacefaring nations, space technology is increasingly used for the benefit of humankind. At the same time, the international community is now facing two major outstanding issues regarding outer space.

First, the space environment is increasingly deteriorating in the face of evident risks caused by orbital congestion and space debris. Secondly, 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, posing a grave challenge of global magnitude to the international community. Ensuring the peaceful exploration of and the prevention of the weaponization and a subsequent arms race in outer space serves the common interests of all countries and is a basic right that all countries must fully uphold. The

international community has attached great importance to the issue of outer space security since 1994, when the General Assembly adopted by an overwhelming majority resolution 49/74, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, that requested the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to negotiate a multilateral space arms control treaty.

China has been an active participant in the multilateral arms control process on space security and has consistently opposed space weaponization and an arms race in outer space. China and Russia have jointly proposed a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects in 2008 and issued an updated version in June of 2014. In September last year, we put forward a feedback working paper to the CD in order to address concerns raised by relevant countries. We call on all countries to work for more convergence and to start multilateral negotiations on an arms control treaty as early as possible with a view to maintaining space safety, security and long-term sustainability.

Sponsored by China, Russia and others, draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.18, on no first placement of weapons in outer space, was adopted by a large majority of countries in the First Committee in 2014 and 2015, which reflects the common aspiration of the international community to prevent the weaponization of outer space. We hope that more countries will extend their support to this year's draft resolution.

China is the main sponsor of the traditional draft resolution on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities (A/C.1/71/L.19) and an active participant in the work of the Group Of Governmental Experts On Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, and has made important contribution to its report. China is of the view that appropriate and feasible transparency- and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) could contribute to mutual confidence, reduced misconception, the regulation of outer space activities and the maintenance of space security. They can complement the process of preventing both the weaponization of outer space and an arms race in outer space. However, TCBMs cannot substitute for the negotiation of a legally binding arms control treaty.

In 2013, the Group Of Governmental Experts on TCBMs concluded its work with a balanced report (see A/68/189), which has reference value for States

formulating TCBMs. However, given that countries are at different stages of development of space capabilities, their concerns and their readiness to embrace certain TCBMs vary widely. China therefore believes that the formulation and implementation of international TCBMs should be conducted through open and equal discussions and abide by the principle of appropriateness and feasibility while taking into account gaps in development in order to ensure the smooth and effective implementation of such measures.

China is committed to the peaceful use of outer space and is actively engaged in international exchange and cooperation. China has conducted satellite launching for more than 10 countries and has participated actively in international cooperation under the framework of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and that of the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization. Late last year, China, Laos, Russia and the United States of America co-hosted the third Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum Workshop on Space Security in Beijing. China will continue to work with the international community and make its due contribution to the maintenance of sustainable peace and collective security in outer space.

Mr. Basafi (Iran (Islamic Republic of)): I associate myself with the statement made by the representative Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/71/PV.14).

Outer space is the common heritage and province of all humankind. All States have freedom and sovereign equality in the discovery of and research in outer space, which must be explored and utilized exclusively for peaceful purposes. In so doing, all States must act in accordance with general principles and applicable international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Outer spaces must remain demilitarized and dewatered and accordingly, any measure by any State towards militarization or weaponization of outer space must be prevented.

The abrogation of the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems opened the possibility of the military use of outer space. The efforts in recent years for the development and deployment of national and collective missile defense systems have further triggered an arms race with implications for outer space and regional and international peace and security. The deployment of such systems, due to their anti-satellite

capability, has seriously challenged global efforts in the prevention of an arms race in outer space. International efforts therefore need to be redoubled to address concerns arising from the development, deployment and proliferation of missile defence systems.

In that context, the Islamic Republic of Iran strongly supports all international efforts and initiatives, within the competent bodies of the United Nations and with the equal participation of all States, to prevent the militarization and weaponization of outer space that are conducted in an open and transparent manner based on consensus and duly take into account the concerns and interests of all States. Accordingly, Iran supports the substantive consideration of the prevention of an arms race in outer space in the Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body.

At the same time, as a spacefaring nation Iran underlines the right of all States to the peaceful application of space technologies, which are indispensable tools for sustainable development. In our view, access to outer space through space science, techniques and technologies should be available to all countries, and any measure aimed at turning space technology into the monopoly of a few countries or imposing any limitation or restriction on transferring space-related science, know-how, technology and services to developing countries should be avoided.

While taking note of the complementary role of transparency- and confidence-building measures in outer space activities and their contribution to efforts in the prevention of an arms race in outer space, we are of the view that, given their intrinsic limitations, such measures cannot replace the negotiation of a universal, legally binding treaty to prevent an arms race in outer space. At the same time, the formulation of any politically binding instrument in that regard should be pursued within the United Nations in an equitable, open and transparent manner, duly taking into account the concerns and interest of all States. Any possible decision thereon should be made by consensus.

Recalling the previous and upcoming joint meetings of the First and Fourth Committees on emerging challenges to space security, we believe that such meetings should be conducted without compromising the mandate, role, powers or functions of the competent bodies of the United Nations, in particular the Conference on Disarmament and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. They should also

not duplicate or replace the activities of such bodies. In addition, we underline the need to observe the principle of equitable geographical representation when inviting experts to the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities. We express our dissatisfaction that a spacefaring nation such as Iran was not included in that Group.

In conclusion, my delegation hopes that our deliberations in this Committee will enhance international efforts to prevent the militarization and weaponization of outer space and ensure that this realm will remain used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Mr. Kim In-chul (Republic of Korea): The benefits of space-based assets and technologies permeate almost every aspect of our daily lives. However, with the rapid expansion of space activities the space environment has become increasingly congested and contested. There are more than 16,000 catalogued objects in space, including 1,200 active satellites, and 80 to 90 space launches are conducted every year. We are facing a range of real challenges, including the accumulation of space debris, intentional and unintentional satellite interference, orbital congestion and the potential collision of space objects.

The Republic of Korea believes that the full implementation and universalization of existing international rules and guidelines, as well as strengthening transparency- and confidence-building measures, are essential in ensuring that the space environment is safe and sustainable, and in preventing any arms races in outer space. The Republic of Korea appreciates the continued efforts to pursue political commitments to encourage responsible actions in outer space. In particular, my delegation reiterates our support for the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities that was adopted in December 2013 (see A/68/189), and underlines the importance of the active implementation by the Member States of the measures proposed by the report.

Furthermore, my delegation would like to reiterate the importance of practical, flexible and integrated approaches on the issue of outer space. In that vein, we believe that last year's joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees (see A/C.1/70/PV.13) provided momentum to discuss how to respond effectively to challenges concerning outer space in a

practical and holistic manner, maximizing the synergy of respective expertise.

The safety and security of space need to be guaranteed by all States. It is therefore imperative that all States use space responsibly and in a peaceful, transparent and safe manner, in accordance with existing international norms. In that regard, it is deeply deplorable that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to abuse the right to the peaceful uses of outer space by using it as a pretext to develop its long-range ballistic missiles, evident from the launch on 7 February, which poses a serious threat to peace and security in the region and beyond. Relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2270 (2016), have clearly decided that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea shall not conduct any launch using ballistic missile technology. Any kind of launch of ballistic missiles conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is therefore in grave violation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's international obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions.

In concluding, the Republic of Korea reaffirms its strong commitment to the peaceful and legitimate use of outer space for the benefit of all humankind. We will continue our contribution to that end.

Mr. Shindo (Japan): The importance of outer space activities has never been greater than it is today. Outer space has immense potential for the social, economic, scientific and technological development of all States, and can also contribute to addressing such global issues as natural disasters and environmental degradation. From that point of view, ensuring the safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities has also become a very urgent issue for the welfare and development of all humankind.

We are concerned about all non-transparent and irresponsible behaviours in outer space, and we should work together to mitigate the risks and dangers that threaten the stable utilization of outer space. To tackle those challenges, enhancing the rule of law in outer space is the top priority for the international community. We therefore reiterate the need to develop and implement, in a prompt and pragmatic manner, the principles of responsible behaviour for outer space activities, which could be an important step for international rule-making regarding outer space activities. In that context, we encourage all States to take appropriate measures,

cooperate in good faith, avoid harmful interference in outer space activities, stress the importance for all States, in a manner consistent with international law, to refrain from any action that directly or indirectly damages or destroys space objects. Needless to say, the development of anti-satellite weapon capability has been a most serious concern.

With regard to the idea of preventing an arms race in outer space, which we support in principle, Japan's outer space activities have always been and will continue to be peaceful in nature. Japan has therefore actively participated in the discussions on the issue of the prevention of an arms race in outer space within the Conference on Disarmament. In that context, we consider that there are a number of issues that need to be carefully examined in the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space.

I would like to point out that international cooperation, transparency and confidence-building measures are also very important if we are to solve those problems. We reaffirm our commitment and call on all States to review and implement, to the extent practicable, the proposed transparency and confidence-building measures contained in the recommendations of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities in its 2013 consensus report (see A/68/189). Japan has held various bilateral and multilateral dialogues and consultations regarding space security that may contribute to confidence-building among countries.

The development of technology could be critical to the stable use of outer space. To deal with the problems of long-lived space debris, which has been increasingly jeopardizing any kind of space activity and potentially limits the use and exploration of outer space, advanced technologies such as space situational awareness or active debris removal are very important. Japan is committed to the research and development of these capabilities for ensuring the stable use of outer space, as stated in Japan's latest basic plan on space policy.

Mr. Benítez Verson (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, the delegation of Cuba fully supports the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/71/PV.14).

The threat of an arms race in outer space is increasing. We note with great concern the ongoing

development of weapons for outer space. We highlight the presence of weapons in outer space, including military satellites, and the absence of a legally binding framework to prevent the placement of weapons in space. Cuba supports the draft resolution entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space" (A/C.1/71/L.18) and is fully committed to preventing an arms race in outer space.

Urgent measures must be adopted to ensure the strictly peaceful use of outer space in the interest of the scientific, economic and social development of all States. We condemn the large network of spy networks that has saturated the geostationary orbit and produces copious amounts of space debris. We believe in the legitimate rights of all States to enjoy equal access to outer space without discrimination as well as to cooperation, in the form of training and transfer of space technology and applications.

Cuba resolutely supports the adoption of a treaty for the prevention and ban on placing weapons in outer space — a legally binding instrument that must also ban the use or threat of use of force against satellites or any other space object. In Cuba's view, the draft resolution introduced by Russia and China to the Conference on Disarmament is a good starting point for negotiations.

Until a prevention-and-ban treaty is adopted, it is appropriate and indeed necessary to implement transparent confidence-building international measures regarding outer space. Those measures must be debated and adopted in the framework of the United Nations, with the participation and consensus of all its Member States. No proposed code of conduct or similar confidence-building measure can legitimize the placing of weapons in outer space. The future of space activities and the guarantee of a stable, peaceful and secure outer space depend largely on strengthening the legal regime that governs it.

In conclusion, I would like to stress the need to promote more effective cooperation among States, without discrimination, with a view to fully and responsibly take advantage of the limitless possibilities of Space research and applications for current and future generations.

Ms. Dris (Malaysia): Malaysia associates itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Singapore on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Malaysia is firmly convinced of the significance of outer space, particularly the prevention of arms race in outer space. It is our belief that outer space must be protected in the common interest of all humankind. Outer space should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and should not become an area of international conflict. My delegation therefore believes in the importance of existing international legal instruments on outer space, such as the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, which prohibits the deployment of weapons of mass destruction in outer space.

At this juncture, the existing legal regime to comprehensively deal with the weaponization of outer space, particularly with regard to the ban of testing, deployment and use of other weapons or weapons system in outer space, remains insufficient. Therefore, we firmly believe in the need to establish a legally binding instrument as a preventive measure. We believe that approach is the most effective means to strengthen the existing legal regime in that area. Such an instrument would provide an impetus to consider surveillance and verification to prevent and restrain the weaponization of outer space.

In this connection, Malaysia calls on the Conference on Disarmament to recommit to its work and to prevent any further delays in agreeing on a programme of work that would include the agenda item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We also support the proposal to consider the inclusion of a third agenda item, to be discussed at the Disarmament Commission, on the issue of space security, but without prejudice to the commitment, deliberation and outcomes on the existing agenda items.

In the absence of a legally binding instrument to address the issue of weaponization, we believe that securing assets, access to, and activities in outer space requires our continuous attention, particularly in the growing role those activities play in the economic, social and cultural development of Member States. The existing vacuum, which could lead to the creation and endorsement of best practices, policies and procedures to facilitate and enhance peaceful activities in outer space, could benefit from our collective and renewed vigour to address the issue of weaponization in outer space in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

As the economic and technological development of Member States continues to evolve and become dependent on space technology, Malaysia reiterates the need to ensure the right to use and explore outer space for peaceful purposes continues to be upheld. We remain committed to collective efforts to promote peaceful, safe and responsible activities in outer space and will participate actively in endeavours that contribute towards that end.

Acknowledging the benefits that may be derived from the exploitation and exploration of outer space, we believe the use of outer space must be promoted on the basis of equality and encourage international cooperation among States in that regard. As such, at the Committee, we are committed to continuing to co-sponsor the draft resolution entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" (A/C.1/71/L.3), and support the draft resolutions entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space" (A/C.1/71/L.18) and "Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities." (A/C.1/71/L.19) We strongly believe that these draft resolutions need to continue receiving our collective and full support.

Mr. Ri In Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/71/PV.14).

Outer space is not the monopoly of a few developed countries. It is the common property of humankind, to be explored and used by all States on the basis of equality without discrimination. Today, an increasing number of countries are developing space technologies in various areas, including in the areas of weather, agriculture and communications, among others. Such trends show that reliance on space technology continues to grow in every country. The successful launch of the earth-observation satellite *Kwangmyongsong-4* by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in February is part of our peaceful development of outer space and our contribution to the shared prosperity of humankind. That fully corresponds to the international community's universal desire to explore and use outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains unchanged in its position to oppose the weaponization of outer space, which can lead to armed conflict and endanger its peaceful development and use. From

that standpoint, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea supports the adoption of draft resolutions on the prevention of an arms race in outer space every year in the First Committee. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is also actively taking part in the discussion of the agenda item on outer space in the Conference on Disarmament (CD).

Some countries oppose starting negotiations on drafting a treaty on the prevention of an arms race in the outer space, which is one of the core issues of the disarmament agenda under discussion at the CD, because they seek a monopoly on outer space. That is the substantial threat that the international community faces in the area of the outer space security. Attempts to gain a strategic advantage in military capability in outer space through its weaponization will have adverse effects on its security as well as world peace and security.

The current development and deployment of missile defence systems, which has been put into full play by a specific country in various regions of the world, despite the strong objections of the international community, seriously undermines world peace and security and only accelerates the arms race.

The reality of the situation has proven that it is becoming an item of vital importance for the international community to lay down a new legal framework for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In that context, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is of the view that the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects, introduced by Russia and China in 2008 and updated in 2014, could be a basis for its intentions and purposes to positively contribute to the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the maintenance of world peace.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue to support the efforts of the international community to oppose the placement of weapons in outer space and prevent its weaponization.

The Acting Chair: I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of the Holy See.

Mr. Salvi (Holy See): In the digital age, humankind has become ever more dependent on space technology for the conduct of everyday life and safeguarding the future. From banking to telecommunications, from

navigation and traffic control to regulating water supplies and electrical grids, the peoples of the earth are dependent on satellite technology. Those same technologies have led to rapid advances in the developing world, such as improvements in communications, banking and agriculture. Space technology, once the province of a few Powers, has become a universal common good, essential for the survival and well-being of all humanity.

Given the universal dependence on such technologies, their vulnerability to attacks is a risk not just for a few nations but for all humankind. At a time when basic resources, like water and power, are tied to control systems linked by satellite communications, the very life blood of societies is vulnerable to attacks in outer space. The humanitarian consequences of a war in space would be devastating for populations far beyond those of adversary States. With fundamental activities dependent on space-based technology, the impact on civilian life would be calamitous. It is imperative that our efforts to outlaw the use of weapons in outer space be sufficiently broad to take into account the changed conditions of contemporary life and the increase of risks to human civilization represented by the danger of war in space. Given the growing body of humanitarian law and increased concern for the humanitarian consequences of war, the integration of prohibitions designed for the protection of human infrastructure should become an essential component of outer-space law.

Given the potential breadth and depth of the impact of armed conflict in space on life on earth, moreover, preservation of the principles of noncombatant immunity and discrimination will both be more important than ever and also more difficult to ensure. Armed conflict in space, especially with the ever-advancing weapons technology, may make it more difficult to contain war within the bounds of law. Therefore, every effort must be made to prevent the expansion of State conflict to space. The risk of counter-population warfare through attacks on satellite technology must be checked by concerted international action.

The Conference on Disarmament should overcome its frustrating, years-long impasse and agree to begin negotiations dealing with conventional-weapons use in space, bearing in mind that weapons of various kinds might be launched from outer space. The United Nations Disarmament Commission should begin consideration of transparency- and confidence-building measures

for space as proposed earlier this year by a number of States.

Our delegation reiterates our recommendation, which was made last year (see A/C.1/70/PV.15), that the adoption of an international code of conduct for outer space activities should be accomplished promptly taking into account the availability of a draft code. As we noted then, the code would make an important contribution to international peace and security. Collaboration in the peaceful development of outer space will provide further protection against armed conflict there. To that end, more attention ought to be given to the promotion of multilateral and international projects in space.

Space is a common heritage of all and an environment on which we all depend. We should ensure that we deal with it accordingly and not make it another source or place of conflict.

The Acting Chair: We all are in need of benedictions from all creeds for our strenuous work.

We have heard the last speaker under the cluster on outer space disarmament aspects.

The Committee will now take up the cluster on conventional weapons.

Ms. Jenie (Indonesia): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). I am reading out a shortened version of my statement. A full version of the statement can be found on PaperSmart.

NAM continues to affirm the sovereign right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and their parts and components for their self-defence and security needs. NAM expresses its concern about unilateral coercive measures and emphasizes that no undue restriction should be placed on the transfer of such arms.

NAM calls on all States, in particular major producing States, to ensure that the supply of small arms and light weapons is limited only to Governments or to entities duly authorized by them. NAM also underlines the need for a balanced, full and effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, and

stresses the urgent need to intensify efforts to promote international cooperation and assistance.

NAM calls for providing the necessary financial, technical and humanitarian assistance to unexploded cluster munitions clearance operations, the social and economic rehabilitation of victims, as well as to ensure full access of affected countries to material, equipment, technology and financial resources for unexploded cluster munitions clearance.

NAM States parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and its Protocols encourage States to become parties to the Convention and its Protocols.

NAM continues to deplore the use, in contravention of international humanitarian law, of anti-personnel mines in conflict situations aimed at maiming, killing and terrorizing innocent civilians. NAM calls upon all States in the position to do so to provide the necessary financial, technical and humanitarian assistance to landmine clearance operations, the social and economic rehabilitation of victims, as well as to ensure full access of affected countries to material equipment, technology and financial resources for mine clearance.

NAM States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction reiterate their commitment to the full implementation of the Cartagena Action Plan and invite those States that have not yet done so to consider becoming parties to the Convention. NAM States parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention look forward to the convening of the fifteenth meeting of States parties to the Convention in late November 2016 in Santiago under Chile's presidency. In that regard, NAM States parties to the Convention call on States to fully discharge their financial responsibilities as soon as possible.

NAM States Parties to the CCW welcome the third informal meeting of CCW experts on lethal autonomous weapon systems in April 2016, and support continued deliberations on the issue in the open-ended Group of Governmental Experts. NAM States parties to the CCW welcome the accession of Algeria and Palestine to the Convention and its annexed Protocols. NAM States parties to the CCW also look forward to a successful

fifth Review Conference of the Convention, to be held in December 2016 under Pakistan's presidency.

Regarding the explosive remnants of the Second World War, particularly in the form of landmines, the Movement calls on the States primarily responsible for laying those mines and leaving explosives outside their territories during the Second World War to cooperate with affected countries and provide mine action support, including information exchange, maps indicating the locations of mines and explosives, technical assistance for mine clearance, defrayal of the costs of clearance and compensation for any losses caused by mines laid.

The Movement notes that the Arms Trade Treaty entered into force on 24 December 2014. NAM calls for its balanced, transparent and objective implementation in strict accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the inherent right of each State to security and to individual or collective self-defence. The Movement also underscores that its implementation should, in no way, affect the sovereign right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and their parts and components for their self-defence and security needs.

In closing, NAM stresses the importance of the reduction of military expenditures by major arms producing countries in accordance with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments and urges those countries to devote those resources to global economic and social development, in particular in the fight against poverty.

Mr. Toro Carnevali (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

States members of UNASUR recognize the contribution and qualitative difference made by the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in providing a comprehensive and multidimensional response to the problems arising from such illicit activities. Nonetheless, we remain concerned about the effects of the illicit production, transfer and circulation of firearms and ammunition and their uncontrolled spread into the hands of civilians, which has had a variety of consequences in many regions and poses a challenge to the sustainable development of our societies. We also reiterate our concern over the close link that exists

between the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and organized crime. The effective implementation of the Programme of Action is a matter of high and urgent priority for UNASUR.

We consider it important to continue promoting the consolidation of international cooperation and assistance and national capacity-building, as the cross-cutting and multidimensional nature of those tools makes them essential to the effective implementation of the measures recommended in the Programme of Action. While recognizing the contribution made by the Programme of Action, UNASUR States wish to reiterate their position on the Programme of Action, stated on previous occasions, that any reference to the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects must necessarily include munitions and explosives. We therefore consider one of the remaining challenges to the implementation of the Programme of Action to be the comprehensive consideration of the issue. UNASUR States consider ammunition to be an integral part of small arms and light weapons, which also include explosives. We have also reiterated that the non-legally binding nature of the Programme of Action is an obstacle to its implementation.

The States members of UNASUR believe that the central role of the Programme of Action in the field of small arms and light weapons makes it necessary to undertake a close and ongoing follow-up of its implementation by the international community. In that regard, UNASUR member States welcome the outcome of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States on the Programme of Action, which took place last June in New York, and look forward to further discussing issues related to munitions, marking, tracing and excessive production of arms at the next Review Conference in 2018.

UNASUR also stresses the need to grant equal and major access to new technologies to the developing world in order to fully address the complex and multidimensional issues related to prevention, combat and eradication of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Taking into account the primary responsibility of States in the prevention, combat and eradication of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects across borders, in the framework of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), a working group on fire arms and ammunition, composed of members of and States associated with MERCOSUR was established in 2001 with the aim of sharing national experiences, working

on the harmonization of national legislation to control firearms and ammunitions and coordinating policies in that area. That forum of exchange has been a useful tool for the coordination of the positions of member and associated States. In that regard, UNASUR member States welcome the outcomes of the meetings of the working group held in Asunción in November 2015 and Montevideo in May 2016.

Further to this agenda item, States members of UNASUR would like to express their support to Argentina for its biennial initiative to introduce the draft resolution entitled “Information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons” (A/C.1/71/L.8). Its implementation creates favourable conditions for the progress in the field of disarmament and contributes in mutual understanding and confidence among member States. Member States of UNASUR also acknowledge the draft resolution entitled “The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects” (A/C.1/71/L.25), introduced by Colombia, South Africa and Japan.

Along the same lines, States members of UNASUR underscore the need to address the issues related to the unregulated trade in conventional arms and its diversion to the illicit market, as well as the necessity to explore the synergies that exist between international instruments related to arms control, such as the Arms Trade Treaty, the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Those instruments will allow coordinated and concerted international responses, which is the only way to address a transnational phenomenon.

The Arms Trade Treaty entered into force in December 2014. UNASUR expects that the first legally binding instrument on the arms trade can contribute to providing an effective response to the serious consequences that the illicit and unregulated trade and trafficking in arms pose for many people and States, in particular through the diversion of arms to unauthorized non-State actors or users who are often linked to transnational organized crime and drug trafficking.

The Chair: I call on the representative of Nigeria to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.50.

Mr. Ejinaka (Nigeria): It is my honour to speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

The African Group remains deeply concerned over the illicit trade, transfer, manufacture, possession and circulation of small arms and light weapons, their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many regions of the world, particularly in Africa. The African Group continues to underscore the importance of a verifiable and effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In that context, the Group welcomes the successful conclusion and the outcome document of the sixth Biennial Meeting of States on the implementation of the Programme of Action in June. It looks forward to the third Review Conference in 2018 as an important event and urges all States to continue to fulfil their obligations regarding reporting, technological transfer, and by ensuring the unhindered flow of international cooperation and assistance as stipulated by the Programme of Action.

The full implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons are key elements to promoting long-term security and creating conditions for sustainable development in Africa. African States have indeed been guided by the efforts to address the menace of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALWs) on the continent, within the framework of the Programme of Action. African States have suffered tremendously and disproportionately from the pernicious effects of the illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons and their destabilizing effects on the socioeconomic stability of the continent.

On numerous occasions, African Heads of State and Governments have expressed concern over the impact of the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons in undermining peace and security and fueling conflicts on the continent, as well as in undermining efforts to improve the standards of the African people. The Group wishes to highlight the extensive work done towards addressing the subject of the illicit trade in SALWs through relevant regional and subregional initiatives, aimed at addressing the challenges created by the illicit trade and proliferation of SALWs in Africa.

Despite those efforts, the Group continues to stress that international assistance and cooperation on a visible

and broader scale remains an essential ingredient to the full implementation of the Programme of Action. In view of this, the Group calls on Member States from developed economies to render cooperation and more technical and financial assistance to developing countries in the realization of the overall objectives of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument with a view to eradicating the illicit trade in SALWs. The African Group believes that such efforts will complementarily promote national and regional initiatives and assist efforts at the global level and urges all States to continue to fulfil their obligations regarding reporting, technological transfer and by ensuring the unhindered flow of international cooperation and assistance as mandated by the Programme of Action.

A veritable confidence-building measure is an actual reduction of military expenditures by major arms producing countries in accordance with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments. In that regard, the African Group urges those States to devote the resources to global economic and social development, particularly in the fight against poverty and disease.

The African Group acknowledges the efforts of States parties to promote the Arms Trade Treaty since its entry into force, as well as the second successful Conference of its States Parties, held in Geneva two months ago. The Group urges appropriate implementation of the Treaty, the only legally binding instrument on the international transfer of conventional arms, in a balanced and objective manner that protects the interests of all States and not just those of the major international producing and exporting States. It reaffirms the sovereign right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and their parts and components for their self-defence and security needs in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The Group acknowledges that unregulated conventional arms transfer fuels the illicit trade and urges major arms suppliers to ratify the Treaty and promote its implementation.

The African Group wishes to raise the lingering question of autonomous weapons. The manufacture of lethal autonomous weapon systems is a threshold that raises ethical, legal, moral and technical issues in relation to international humanitarian and international human rights law.

The Group welcomes the commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the United Nations Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa based in Lomé. While the Centre has continued to operate on a lean purse and limited resources, it has nonetheless continued to offer technical assistance to States across the African continent. That included its engagement of more than 1,000 representatives of Governments and regional organizations and more than 2,000 members of civil society through a wide range of activities. The Group commends the efforts of the Centre and its management, and seizes the opportunity to call for more partnership and further assistance to bolster its efforts and ensure that the Centre continues to deliver on its mandate.

Finally, the delegation of Nigeria would like to introduce the draft resolution entitled “United Nations Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa” (A/C.1/71/L.50) on behalf of the African Group. We note with satisfaction the overwhelming support for the resolution in the past sessions of the General Assembly and call on all delegations for their continued support. The presentation of the resolution is to ensure, among other things, the redoubling of efforts on disarmament education and support for African States to address the challenges of arms proliferation.

The Chair: I shall now call on those delegations that have requested the floor to exercise the right of reply.

Mr. Ri Tong Il (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea): This morning, the representative of South Korea once again raised the issue of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s February launch as illegal under Security Council resolution 2270 (2016). The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea once again totally rejects such absurd nonsense as a ridiculous and illegal argument, with no grounds whatever.

For the benefit of delegations here, I would like to brief them on the peaceful nature of the outer-space development activities of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Like any other country in the world, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has been undertaking efforts in the area for the past 18 years and has now become one of 10 space-faring nations with a full-fledged capacity for manufacturing and launching satellites. In doing so, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, as a Member of the United Nations, is exercising its sovereign right under the Charter of the United Nations. At the international level, the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea has acceded to and ratified the Outer Space Treaty, and is party to it. Article I of the Treaty states that

“[t]he exploration and use of outer space... shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and shall be the province of all mankind.”

South Korea has raised a question about the legality of the actions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We have the Charter and the relevant outer-space treaties and conventions. The representative of South Korea referred to the Security Council's resolution against our peaceful satellite launch, but is there any provision that states that a satellite launch poses a threat to international peace and security? And is there any article in any other international law that states that satellites contravene peace and security around the world? There is no provision in existing international norms and laws that says that satellite launches are against the law or that they threaten peace and security. That is why the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has raised this contradiction with the Secretariat, but almost six months has elapsed since then and no answer is forthcoming.

To return to the legality of the activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we are entitled to full capacity in that area as a party to the Outer Space Treaty. We have been successfully launching satellites for the past 18 years, most recently in February. We successfully traced our satellite, which was for Earth observation, into orbit. We have a five-year outer-space development programme that will include many more launches of peaceful satellites, including geostationary satellites.

I now turn to the second issue, that of double standards. More than 60 countries participate in outer space activities, including the United States, South Korea and Japan — the countries that brought the issue of the peaceful satellite launch of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the Security Council, with South Korea at the forefront. Now the question is: What was the South Korean representative referring to when he mentioned the use of ballistic missiles? I have one question. What kind of technology did South Korea use when launching its own satellites? Was it not ballistic-missile technology? What about the United States? Did it use any other technology? There is no

technology other than ballistic missile technology. And Japan is the same.

So why is it only the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that is singled out as an issue in the Security Council? That raises a lot of questions in terms of its legality. The resolution is self-contradictory and against international law generally and the Outer Space Treaty in particular. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is therefore once again clarifying its position. We will continue to advance our peaceful outer-space activities by continuing our satellite launches in our exercise of our right to peaceful outer-space development, for the full dignity of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. No one can block our progress. This is an issue of the dignity of our nation and our people.

Mr. Kim In-chul (Republic of Korea): I am sorry that I am compelled to take the floor on this topic. I will state a couple of facts that speak for themselves.

First, with regard to the intentions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, earlier this year the leader of North Korea publicly instructed that several kinds of ballistic rockets, capable of carrying nuclear warheads, be developed in order to further enhance the country's capacity for nuclear attack. It is therefore clear that the true intention of North Korea's so-called satellite launches is not for the peaceful use of outer space but for the development of long-range ballistic missiles.

Secondly, in a matter of basic international law 101, Security Council resolutions 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), 2094 (2013) and 2270 (2016) have made it crystal clear that North Korea should not conduct any launches using ballistic missile technology. Furthermore, Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations specifies that it is the obligation of Member States to abide by the decisions of the Security Council, and article 103 clearly states that obligations under the Charter prevail over obligations under any other international agreement. North Korea is therefore bound by its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions, and its claims that even its past record of brazenly conducting nuclear tests and missile launches represents the peaceful use of outer space can hardly be justified.

Mr. Hall (United States of America): I am taking the floor to exercise my right of reply to comments made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

As President Obama has said, the United States strongly condemns the missile tests of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which threaten international peace and security and violate multiple Security Council resolutions. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea itself has said that the ballistic missiles are intended to serve as delivery vehicles for nuclear weapons to cities in the United States and those of our allies in the Republic of Korea and Japan. We continue to call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to end its destabilizing and threatening behaviour and to abide by its international obligations and commitments.

Mr. Ri Tong Li (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My country totally rejects the allegations of the representative of the United States against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is self-contradictory that the United States representative argues that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is using ballistic-missile technology. The representative referred to a statement by President Obama, and I think his country was confused between a satellite launch and ballistic missile launch. We are all professionals in this forum, yet nobody can understand what they are talking about. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched a satellite, but they are saying that ballistic-missile technology was used.

They are the ones who first initiated using both launch capabilities for satellites and for ballistic missiles in using ballistic-missile technology in all cases. The United States cannot launch its own satellites by gunfire. It is using the same technology. Then why is it that the United States continues to raise this issue? it is the one that has launched the largest number of satellites, including satellites used for military espionage that cover the entire globe, thereby conducting espionage in every corner of the world. Spying on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is just one part of its illegal espionage activities over sovereign States. We are under ongoing surveillance in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by military satellite. What they are conducting is a very dangerous move against the sovereignty of all countries represented here.

Concerning the South Korean representative's remarks, he too is confused and cannot distinguish between satellites and ballistic missiles. He continues to refer to Security Council resolutions, which again we totally reject because this is a matter of political abuse. He quoted the Charter of the United Nations.

He cannot quote the Charter in that reference. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has acted in full conformity with international law and the Outer Space Treaty. In the Outer Space Treaty, there is no article that stipulates that a satellite launch or a ballistic missile launch is a threat to international peace and security. I want to recommend that the South Korean representative carefully study in depth all provisions of the Outer Space Treaty.

Mr. Sano (Japan): Let me briefly exercise my right of reply to the remarks made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

It is highly inappropriate to compare Japan's activities in the field of space development and those of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Japanese activities in the field of space development are fully in compliance with the Outer Space Treaty and other international agreements and for strictly peaceful uses. While the Democratic People's Republic of Korea repeatedly violates the relevant Security Council resolutions, which prohibit any launches that use ballistic missile technology, the Security Council resolutions have a legally binding effect, so Japan once again urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions and the 2005 joint statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks.

Mr. Kim In-chul (Republic of Korea): It is really disturbing that the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should abuse this forum to reiterate the same statement every day with the sole purpose of having it carried in its controlled media for mass propaganda. I will just say that it was recently revealed that North Korea has just a handful of working, controlled websites. I would also like to stress that its people have no access to telecommunications with the outside world. I think that it should address those problems first rather than making absurd claims on the peaceful use of outer space.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.