Statement by Mr. KIM Hak-jo
First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the UN in Geneva
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Thematic Debate on Outer Space
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1. Since the first launch of space object in 1957, we have become more and more reliant on space science and technology, so reliant that any interruption of the use of outer space would disrupt our daily lives. However, cases of collision of space objects of February 2009 show us that we are vulnerable to such interruptions. It is therefore, truly important that we maintain outer space an area of peaceful use and cooperation.

2. In this vein, my government welcomes the various efforts made by the international community to ensure safety, security and sustainability of outer space. Strengthening Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures, commonly referred to as TCBMs is one of the initiatives in this direction that the Korean government has put much emphasis on. We believe that voluntary TCBMs could contribute to enhancing satellite safety, reducing uncertainties in the application of dual use space technology, and in turn, increase space security. In this regard, my government appreciates the EU Council’s approval of the “Code of Conduct on Outer Space Activities” draft and the UN General Assembly’s endorsement of “Space debris Mitigation Guidelines” as a concrete effort to enhance TCBMs.
3. The Republic of Korea also believes that the discussion on the “Prevention of Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS)” at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) will further contribute to international efforts to address any possible weakness in the existing legal framework for the security of outer space. In this regard, we note that the interactive dialogues on the draft text of the “Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat of Use of Force Against Outer Space Objects (PFWT)” submitted by the Russian Federation and China have provided an opportunity to get a clearer picture of the various views on the PAROS agenda.

4. The above mentioned efforts, all combined would serve to enhance the safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities and it is my government’s view that these efforts should not be mutually exclusive, but rather explored in a balanced and pragmatic way. In this regard, the Republic of Korea also supports close cooperation and enhanced dialogue among relevant international fora, such as the CD, the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), the First and Fourth Committees of the UN, and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), on the basis that it will promote the harmonization of the ongoing efforts through the exchange of respective expertise and experiences.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Republic of Korea has long pursued space programs with a firm belief that the peaceful uses of outer space would contribute to the advancement of human life. My government is also well aware of the dual-use nature of space technology and therefore, has sincerely lived up to its commitment to international nonproliferation and has taken every measure to ensure transparency in space activities. Taking this opportunity, I reassure you of my government’s full support toward the international efforts in enhancing the safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities.

Thank you.