Statement by the Chinese Delegation on Outer Space at the Thematic Debate at the First Committee of the UNGA

Mr. Chairman,

The enduring peace of outer space is closely related to the security, development and prosperity of all countries. At the same time, the risks of the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space are on the rise. Ensuring peaceful use of outer space and preventing weaponization of and an arms race in outer space serves the common interests of all countries and is also the common responsibility.

With growing security challenges in outer space, the international consensus on preventing weaponization of and an arms race in outer space is increasing. The UNGA has, for consecutive years and by overwhelming majority, adopted resolutions on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS), calling for negotiations of legally-binding international instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space at the Conference on Disarmament (CD).

Mr. Chairman,

China firmly opposes weaponization of and an arms race in outer space, and is dedicated to maintaining peace and security there. China is co-sponsor of the UNGA resolutions on PAROS, and is actively promoting the implementation of the resolutions in the CD.

China and Russia jointly submitted to the CD the draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects (PPWT) in 2008. In 2009, taking into consideration relevant comments and proposals, China and Russia submitted to the CD a working paper to further clarify the draft PPWT. We hope the CD will commence substantive discussions on the basis of these efforts as soon as possible. We are ready to work with all parties to explore effective ways to resolve relevant issues, including
verification, and further improve the draft PPWT.

Mr. Chairman,

China attaches importance to transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) in outer space. Appropriate and feasible TCBMs are conducive to enhancing mutual trust, reducing misperceptions, regulating space activities and maintaining space security. Such measures are complementary to legally-binding international instrument on preventing weaponization of and an arms race in outer space. TCBMs and PAROS do not conflict with each other. On the other hand, as voluntary measures in nature, TCBMs are not legally-binding and cannot substitute negotiations of legally-binding instrument on PAROS.

China supports the important role of the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on TCBMs in Outer Space Activities. We welcome the pragmatic and constructive discussions of the first session of the GGE, and hope the GGE will continue to explore all related issues and proposals in a comprehensive and in-depth manner to achieve substantive outcome.

Mr. Chairman,

The security of outer space bears on the common welfare of the mankind. All states should proceed from a long-term perspective and make relentless efforts to prevent weaponization of and an arms race in outer space. China is ready to work with all parties to contribute to maintaining the lasting peace and security in outer space.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.