Mr. Chairman, my delegation will vote “No” on draft resolution L.14 “No first placement of weapons in outer space” (“NFP”). In considering the NFP Pledge, the United States took seriously into account the criteria – for evaluating space-related transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) – that were established by consensus – including by Russia and China – in a UN-sponsored Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) study. The July 2013 GGE consensus study of outer space TCBMs was later endorsed by the full General Assembly in Resolution 68/50. Per the GGE consensus report, non-legally binding TCBMs for outer space activities should:

(1) **be** clear, practical, and proven, meaning that both the application and the efficacy of the proposed measure must be demonstrated by one or more actors;

(2) **be** able to be effectively confirmed by other parties in their application, either independently or collectively; and finally,

(3) **reduce** or even eliminate the causes of mistrust, misunderstanding, and miscalculation with regard to the activities and intentions of States.
In applying the GGE’s consensus criteria, the United States finds that Russia’s NFP Pledge contains a number of significant problems:

**First**, the NFP Pledge does not adequately define what constitutes a “weapon in outer space.”

**Second**, it would not be possible to confirm effectively a State’s political commitment “not to be the first to place weapons in outer space.”

**Third**, the NFP Pledge focuses exclusively on space-based weapons. It is silent in regard to terrestrially-based ASAT weapons, which, as we have previously noted, constitute a significant threat to spacecraft.

To date, proponents – including Russia – of the NFP Pledge have not explained, and did not explain during the First Committee’s Thematic Discussion, how the NFP Pledge is consistent with the GGE’s consensus criteria for TCBMs.

Given the inability to confirm compliance, the lack of an adequate definition of a “weapon in outer space,” and the NFP Pledge’s failure to address the near-term threat of terrestrially-based anti-satellite capabilities, the United States has determined that the NFP Pledge fails to satisfy the GGE’s consensus criteria for a valid TCBM.

Therefore, United States will vote “No” on this First Committee resolution and intends to vote “No” again in the full General Assembly.

If the international community is serious about maintaining the space environment for future generations, we must develop and implement pragmatic and effective measures on a timely basis that remedy concrete problems, and reject flawed initiatives – such as the NFP Pledge – that are problematic, ineffective, or irrelevant to protecting the security and sustainability of the space environment.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.