EU Statement

By

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on possible challenges to space security and sustainability

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

We are very pleased to attend this joint meeting of the First and the Fourth Committees, and we warmly welcome you as our Chair. We believe it is important to address the very diverse benefits and complex challenges connected with human activity in outer space in an integrated way, and we would like to take this opportunity to make a number of points.

We would first like to underline that space activities and technologies are essential tools that can greatly help us all to deliver on the realisation of the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda:

- Space applications are drivers for economic growth and innovation that contribute to the competitiveness of industry and job creation and thus to poverty reduction;
- They can be instrumental in tackling major societal challenges such as climate change, disaster management, health care and education for all, and protecting the environment, scarce resources and bio-diversity;
- They are also important for the prevention and management of conflict and crime, as well as for the protection of human rights.

Our second point, Chair, is that the EU and its Member States, as others, have developed significant space capabilities in the areas of global navigation, earth observation and research, on which our societies increasingly depend.

Our third point is that, our increasing reliance on space creates a shared need for a safe, sustainable and secure space environment. We should therefore tackle significant risks and challenges together. To name a few: dangerous space debris and the risk of destructive collisions; the need to share the geo-stationary orbit and the radio-frequency spectrum; the threat of deliberate disruption or destruction of satellites.

This again, Chair, explains why the EU and its Member States attach great importance to the development and implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures as a means of strengthening security and ensuring sustainability in the peaceful use of outer space.

We support discussions on a non-legally binding instrument that that would foster increased international cooperation and establish standards of responsible behaviour across the full range of space activities, strengthening commitments to non-interference in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, facilitating equitable access to outer space and increasing transparency of outer space activities.

We also support the continuation of work on the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS) and on a shared understanding of the existing principles of global space governance as a measure to prevent conflict and to promote international cooperation.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
Finally, we strongly support the very important work that has been carried out by the COPUOS Working Group on Long Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities which concluded negotiations on a first set of guidelines in 2016. We look forward to working with the Chair and all partners to conclude negotiations by the deadline set for the conclusion of the Working Group in June 2018.

Thank you.