Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished participants,

The issues of outer space are becoming increasingly relevant in order to ensure international peace and security because space provides new and previously not conceived unprecedented opportunities for both the peaceful use, as well as, development of military warfare.

The joint ad-hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees, held last year, was very crucial to assess possible challenges to security and sustainability. The growing robust expansion into space compels us to review measures overcoming gaps in the existing legal regime to prevent the weaponization of outer space.

Confidence-building measures are essential in the process of development of general considerations for preventing outer space militarization.

In this regard, we see great value in the resolution on “No First Placement of Weapons in Outer Space”. We are also supportive of the Resolution on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space activities.

This year, under the framework of the subsidiary body 3 of the Conference on Disarmament on the prevention of arms race, outer space discussions were held to reach an understanding in the areas of commonalities, deepening technical discussions and broadening areas of agreement. That also enabled considering effective measures, including legal instruments for negotiations. We therefore welcome the adoption of the report of the subsidiary body.

Kazakhstan fully endorses the Draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, introduced by China and Russia at the Conference on Disarmament in 2008 and 2014. However, several severe political hurdles, and the impasse in the Conference on Disarmament, impede all attempts to achieve a legally binding international agreement.
Kazakhstan has supported the establishment of a new expert group intended to further elaborate legally binding measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. An expert from Kazakhstan participated in the first session of the Group, held on August 6-17 this year in Geneva. We believe that the Group’s work would help narrow differences on how the legal regime of outer space could be further codified and developed.

Kazakhstan hosts the “Baikonur” space-launch site on its territory and has been actively participating in peaceful space exploration programmes with Russia, France and some other countries.

We believe that it is vital to have further discussions on the issue of Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) by involving other international bodies that are engaged in and committed to this matter. To facilitate the start of these negotiations, we support a draft Treaty on preventing the placement of weapons in outer space, as prepared by China and the Russian Federation.

Mr. Chairman,

We consider the Hague Code of Conduct as an important part of the non-proliferation regime and underline that the proliferation of sensitive missile technology constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security. At the same time the Code should not act as an impediment to peaceful uses of space technologies.

As a country that chaired the HCoC regime in 2016-2017, we warmly welcome the activities of the Swedish Chairmanship for 2018-2019 in this area. We salute Sweden’s valuable efforts towards fulfilling the important mission of HCoC, and express our support for the draft resolution of the UN General Assembly on HCoC which has been approved by the Member States of the regime during the 17th HCoC Annual Regular meeting in Vienna on 28-29 May 2018.

Mr. Chairman,

Presently, dozens of countries possess sophisticated space programmes, or are developing them. We need to ensure that such dangerous systems that potentially could be weaponized do not undermine the existing structure of agreements on arms limitation, particularly, in the nuclear-missile sphere.

To conclude, Kazakhstan, as a responsible international actor and a unilateral adherent to the principles of and guidelines of the MTCR, would like to reinforce that our common goal is to ensure that space remains a sphere of cooperation free from weapons. We are firmly committed to developing it used for human advancement and well-being.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.