Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me reiterate that Nepal considers the outer space as a common heritage of mankind and maintains its view that its exploration and use should be carried out for the wider benefit of humanity.

All countries, irrespective of their size, level of economic and scientific development should be given equal opportunities to access space technology. Moreover, countries such as LDCs and LLDCs, which are yet to benefit proportionately from the remarkable achievements of space technology, should be given due consideration in their access to such technology. My delegation urges the technologically advanced countries to support this initiative.

Nepal is firm in its conviction that the weaponization of outer space increases existential threats to humanity. The sanctity of the outer space as a zone of harmony and cooperation should be preserved. It should be kept absolutely free of weapons and arms race. The threat of weaponization of outer space must be addressed with unremitting international negotiations.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal believes that prevention of an arms race in outer space is in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and is an essential condition for the promotion and strengthening of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

In this connection, my delegation welcomes the commencement of the work of the Group
of Government Experts tasked with considering and making recommendations on substantial elements of a legally binding international instrument on the prevention of arms race in outer space, including, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal believes that the transparency and confidence building measures (TCBMs) rooted in political commitments have the potential of creating a conducive environment for general and complete disarmament. These measures are the tools to prevent an arms race in outer space and ensure sustainability of outer space activities. Moreover, such measures should complement the space-related existing international legal framework without undermining the legal obligations of the international community. In addition, they should not hamper the lawful use of outer space, particularly by the latecomers from the least developed countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal also believes that the adherence to the existing legal instruments applicable to outer space also helps promote TCBMs among member States.

Nepal believes that the space-farer States should maintain transparency by sharing information on the principles and goals of their outer space policies as well as their security-related space activities to other countries. We support the idea of developing the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Office for Outer Space Affairs as a joint repository for such information.

I conclude, Mr. Chairman, the use of outer space should be for the greater cause of humanity, including the achievement of SDGs.

I thank you.