

**Statement by the Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran  
at the First Committee's Thematic Discussion on  
“outer space (disarmament aspects)”**

**19 October 2016**

*In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful*

***Mr. Chairman,***

I associate myself with the statement by Indonesia on behalf of NAM.

Outer space is the common heritage and province of all mankind. All States have freedom and sovereign equality in discovery of, and research in, outer space, which must be explored and utilized *exclusively* for peaceful purposes. To do so, all States shall act in accordance with general principles and applicable international law and the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. Outer spaces must remain de-militarized and de-weaponized, and accordingly, any measure by any State towards militarization or weaponization of outer space shall be prevented.

The abrogation of the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems opened the possibility of the military use of outer space. The efforts in recent years for the development and deployment of national and collective missile defense systems have further triggered an arms race with implications for outer space and regional and international peace and security. Deployment of such systems due to their anti-satellite capability, have seriously challenged global efforts in the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Therefore, international efforts need to be redoubled to address concerns arising from the development, deployment and proliferation of missile defense systems.

In this context, the Islamic Republic of Iran strongly supports all international efforts and initiatives within the competent bodies of the United Nations, with the equal participation of all States, in an open and transparent manner, based on consensus, and taking duly into account the concerns and interests of all States, for the prevention of militarization and weaponization of outer space. Accordingly, Iran supports the substantive consideration of the prevention of an arms race in outer space in the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body.

At the same time, as a spacefaring nation, Iran underlines the right of all States to peaceful applications of space technologies, which are indispensable tools for sustainable development.

In our view, access to outer space through space science, techniques, and technologies should be available to all countries and any measure aimed at turning the space technology into a

monopoly of a few countries or imposing any limitation or restriction to transfer, to developing countries, of space-related science, know-how, technology and services shall be avoided.

*Mr. Chairman,*

While taking note of the complementary role of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities and their contribution to efforts on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, we are of the view that, given their intrinsic limitations, such measures cannot replace the negotiation of a universal legally binding treaty to prevent arms race in outer space.

At the same time, formulation of any politically binding instrument in this regard should be pursued within the United Nations, in an equitable, open and transparent manner, and taking fully into account the concerns and interest of all States, and any possible decision thereon should be made by consensus.

Recalling the previous and upcoming joint meetings of the First and Fourth Committees on emerging challenges to space security, we believe that such meetings shall be conducted without compromising the mandate, role and powers and functions of the competent bodies of the United Nations, in particular the Conference on Disarmament and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, and also should not duplicate or replace the activities of such bodies.

We also underline the need for observing the principle of equitable geographical representation in inviting experts to the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities. We express our dissatisfaction that such a spacefaring nation as Iran was not included in this Group.

In conclusion, my delegation hopes that our deliberation in this Committee would enhance international efforts to prevent militarization and weaponization of outer space and to ensure that this realm will always remain exclusively for peaceful uses.

*I thank you Mr. Chairman.*