

**Statement by Ambassador Tehmina Janjua, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, Geneva and Conference on Disarmament during the Thematic Debate of the First Committee on Outer Space (Disarmament Aspects)**  
**(19 October 2016)**

**Chairperson,**

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement delivered by NAM under this cluster.

Outer space is the common heritage of all humankind. It is in our collective interest to explore and use outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes, for the benefit of all. It should not be militarized or weaponized and turned into a realm of conflict.

Weaponisation of outer space is not science fiction anymore. With the ever growing use of outer space by an increasing number of states, both for civilian and military purposes, the potential and the risk of its weaponization cannot be ruled out. Weapons in space would lead to instability, and negatively affect international and regional peace and security.

The Outer Space Treaty of 1967 recognized that the exploration and use of outer space shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries and shall be the province of all humanity. The treaty prohibits the placement of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in outer space, but does not cover the placement of other types of weapons including conventional weapons in outer space.

Moreover, the development and deployment of Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) systems and their integration into space assets has added another dangerous dimension to this issue. We share the concern expressed by NAM over the negative implications of ABM systems and the pursuit of advanced military technologies capable of being deployed in outer space. They will have wide-ranging implications for regional as well as international security and stability.

All of these concerns need to be addressed in a legally binding treaty. For several decades now, the international community has continued to make efforts to avert the weaponization of outer space and prevent an arms race from developing. The General Assembly has addressed this issue year after

year with overwhelming support. The issue of PAROS has been on the CD's agenda for over three decades. It is fully ripe for the commencement of negotiations on a legally binding treaty.

There is a considerable body of existing knowledge on PAROS. Much work has been done in the CD by the Ad-Hoc Committees on this subject from 1985 to 1992. The draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects, commonly known as PPWT, tabled jointly by the Russian Federation and China in 2008, and updated in 2014, provides a useful basis for the commencement of negotiations in the CD.

We, therefore, see no impediment in starting negotiations on such an important issue. The states opposing such negotiations should take a broader view. Space is no longer an exclusive preserve of a few developed nations. Developing countries, including my own country, are tapping into space technology in diverse areas ranging from meteorology and disaster management to telecommunications. Their reliance on space technology will grow further in the years to come. The dominance enjoyed by certain countries in outer space owing to their current technological prowess, therefore, cannot last forever. And this time, the developing countries will neither carry the burden of non-proliferation, nor will they accept any discriminatory restrictions which hamper their peaceful pursuits in outer space.

The start of substantive work on PAROS in the CD would be a welcome step. It would contribute to international and regional peace and security as well as to the strengthening of global non-proliferation and disarmament agenda. It would also end the deadlock in the CD, which is in part due to the refusal of some states to commence negotiations on PAROS. And if certain states continue to oppose such negotiations, then they should acknowledge their responsibility in perpetuating the CD's deadlock.

**Chairperson,**

We take note of the consensus report and recommendations of the last UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Transparency and Confidence Building Measures (TCBMs) in Outer Space. We agree that TCBMs should be aimed at increasing the security, safety and sustainability of outer space. We particularly welcome the GGE's recommendation to further develop international cooperation between space-faring and non-space-faring nations in the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of all States.

We recognize the value of TCBMs as well as non-legally binding Codes of Conduct in promoting trust among states. We have been participating actively in these efforts. We believe that such initiatives should be pursued in an inclusive, universal and participatory manner within the UN system, taking into account the interests of all states. However, these voluntary measures cannot be a substitute for legally binding treaty based obligations. There are clear gaps in the international legal regime governing the use of outer space with security implications. These gaps must be plugged by concluding a treaty on PAROS in the CD.

**Chairperson,**

Pakistan has been co-sponsoring the annual General Assembly resolutions on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, which continue to be adopted by an overwhelming majority. Pakistan also co-sponsors the resolution titled “No First Placement of Weapons in Outer Space” which is a laudable initiative.

Pakistan is party to all of the five core multilateral treaties governing the peaceful uses of outer space, including the 1967 Outer Space Treaty; the 1968 Rescue Agreement; the 1972 Liability Convention; the 1975 Registration Convention; and the 1979 Moon Agreement. We stand ready to explore additional treaties that would contribute to preventing the weaponization of outer space.

Pakistan is a member of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UN COPUOS). COPUOS has an important role in maximizing the benefits of space capabilities in the service of humanity, particularly in the fields of environment, health and disaster mitigation.

**Chairperson,**

Pakistan considers joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees held in October 2015 to be a positive initiative, and welcomes the decision for holding a follow-up joint meeting in 2017.

**I thank you, Chairperson.**