

China's Views on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Space Activities

1. China supports the resolution entitled "Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Space Activities" (A/RES/70/53) adopted by the General Assembly of United Nations at its 70th session.

2. China attaches high importance to the transparency and confidence-building measures in space activities, and has been an active participant in the relevant UN work. China has co-sponsored the UN resolutions on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Space Activities. As a member of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities from 2012 to 2013, China has made positive contribution to the conclusion of the final report. China attended the first joint Ad Hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees of the UN General Assembly in 2015, and actively participated in the discussion on "the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities" in UNCOPUOS, with a view to promoting peace, security and long-term sustainability in outer space.

3. China is of the view that appropriate transparency and confidence-building measures in space activities are conducive to enhancing mutual trust, reducing miscalculation and promoting cooperation in peaceful use of outer space, and to some extent conducive to the prevention of weaponization in outer space and the verification of a future international legal instrument in this regard. In fact, the commitment of countries to

refraining from placing weapons in outer space and preventing the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space itself would be one of the most important transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities. However, transparency and confidence-building measures are not legally binding and inadequate to plug the loopholes in existing international legal instruments. These measures can be complementary to a negotiated international legal instrument on preventing the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space, but cannot replace the legal instrument.

4. China believes that the best way to prevent the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space is to conclude a new international legal instrument through negotiation. For many years, China and the Russian Federation, along with many other countries, actively promoted the negotiation of a treaty on preventing the weaponization of outer space in Conference on Disarmament. China and Russia jointly submitted the draft of the Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects (PPWT, CD/1839) to the Conference on Disarmament in February, 2008, and submitted an updated version (CD/1985) of the draft in June 2014. China and Russia jointly submitted another working paper (CD/2042) in response to some comments on the draft in September, 2015. The draft PPWT has responded to the international society's call for preventing an arms race in outer space, and reflected the international attempt to address the most imperative threat to space security. Therefore, the draft PPWT is the most mature space security initiative with extensive international consensus. It is hoped that the CD could conduct substantive work based on the draft and

start relevant negotiation at an early date.

5. As a nation actively engaged in space utilization activities, China has implemented a series of transparency and confidence-building measures, to maintain the peace, security and long-term sustainability in outer space.

a) China has actively exchanged information on its space policy. It has issued white papers on "China's space activities" on four occasions in 2000, 2006, 2011 and 2016 respectively. In the latest issue of "China's Space Activities" which was published in December 2016, China reiterated its position on peaceful use of outer space, and its opposition against the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space, and elaborated in detail the purposes and principles of its space activities and major tasks in the following five years, testifying to the transparency in China's space policy, programs and activities.

b) China has acceded to the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer space in December, 1988. It has faithfully implemented the obligation of the Convention and registered the information of objects launched into space accordingly. China has issued Provisions and Procedures for Registration of Space Objects in 2001 to regulate its international and domestic registration of space objects. In 2002, China has issued the Interim Measures on the Administration of Permits for Civil Space Launch Projects. Moreover, for major launching activities, China usually publicizes through media or coordinate with relevant countries or international organizations.

c) China attaches high importance to the safety of nuclear power source in outer space. China has excised safety measures

for radioactive isotope in the operation of CHANG E-3, and given an introduction at the meeting of Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the UNCOPUOS. The ongoing CHANG E-4 task will also use radioactive isotope in outer space, as introduced by the Chinese delegation at the 59th session of UNCOPUOS. China will carry on the safety work of nuclear power source in outer space in accordance with the relevant UN principles and frames.

d) China is highly concerned with the risks caused by space debris, orbital congestion to space assets and activities in recent years, and has maintained regular bilateral exchanges on space debris, satellite collision avoidance and other issues.

e) China attaches high importance to space debris mitigation and spacecraft protection. As an active participant in the work of UNCOPUOS and IADC, China has played a positive role in the formulation of relevant international norms. In the meantime, China has made due contribution to the international efforts by improving its own debris mitigation capacity and mechanism, and set national technical standards by issuing Administrative Measures for Space Debris Mitigation and Spacecraft Protection and National Standards for the Requirements for Space Debris Mitigation.

f) China holds the view that, all countries have equal rights to explore, develop and utilize outer space peacefully, and stands for strengthening international space exchanges and cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, peaceful utilization and inclusive development. China has concluded over 100 bilateral space cooperation agreements or MoUs with over 30 countries, launched satellites for over 10 countries. Currently,

China is actively promoting international application of Beidou Navigation System and remote-sensing satellite constellation cooperation among BRICS countries. China is also dedicated to promoting space cooperation within the frame work of UN and Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO), with an eye on sharing among all countries the "dividends" brought by space technology advancement, and promoting common development and long-term sustainability of space utilization by all mankind.

g) China has carried out voluntary space launch sites visit actively. It has invited officials and experts around the world to its space launch sites to observe space launching on many occasions.

6. China stands ready to work with all countries to promote the prevention of weaponization of and an arms race in outer space and explore practical and feasible transparency and confidence-building measures, so as to continuously make contribution to the peace, security and long-term sustainability in outer space.