

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ANUPAM RAY, OEWG ON PREVENTION OF ARMS RACE
IN OUTER SPACE, GENEVA, JULY 23, 2025

Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by expressing my delegation's appreciation for your very skilful and patient conduct of the work of this OEWG. We would like to congratulate you for your success in facilitating agreement on the Agenda and Organization of Work that have allowed the group to move forward and commence substantive discussions.

It is well known that there is a divergence of views, going back several decades, on approaches to Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. The constitution of this OEWG is something of an innovation in the history of United Nations consideration of PAROS.

In this background my delegation attaches importance to the elucidation of this consensus on the Agenda and organizational matters. It is, in our understanding, a significant development in the history of the multilateral consideration of the Prevention of Arms Race in Outer Space.

This decision of the Group acquires significance in the background of the consensual outcome of the Group of Governmental Experts constituted on the basis of UNGA Resolution 77/250.

It also acquires significance given contemporary conflicts and the disagreements, complexities and challenges that the international community currently faces in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The proceedings of this Group take place in the context of the rapidly growing salience of Outer Space, driven by dramatic technological advancements, on every facet of contemporary life. New actors have emerged. Dual-use space technology and assets are a reality.

Mr. Chairman,

India believes that Outer Space belongs to all of us and that it should be an ever-expanding frontier of cooperative endeavour. The benefits flowing from advances in space technology and its applications should be utilized for the good of all.

India is a space-faring nation, with a well-developed space programme, with development and security dimensions. Further to our landing a spacecraft on the Moon 2 years ago, India took a step forward in its human spaceflight programme with the recent spaceflight of an Indian astronaut, Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, to the International Space Station along with colleagues from the United States, Poland and Hungary. In addition to its human space flight programme, Gaganyaan, India is working on a Space Station and on crewed lunar spaceflight.

Mr. Chairman,

India has actively engaged in multilateral processes aimed to address Outer Space security.

Indian experts participated in the GGE on further practical measures on PAROS pursuant to UNGA resolutions 72/250 and 77/250.

India also participated constructively in the OEWG on reducing space threats through norms, rules, and principles of responsible pursuant to UNGA resolution 76/231.

Mr. Chairman,

India would like to reiterate its preference for a legally binding instrument on Preventing Arms Race in Outer Space, which is universally acceptable, effectively verifiable, and multilaterally negotiated in the Conference on Disarmament.

The draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space could be a useful basis for further discussions.

Mr. Chairman,

India is also open to the development of universal and non-discriminatory non-binding norms and transparency and confidence building measures. While such measures cannot substitute for a legally binding instrument, they can be complementary in nature.

India believes that threats to safety, security and sustainability of outer space; considerations relating to misunderstandings, miscalculations and misperceptions; as well as thresholds for what may constitute a use of force in Outer Space, must be considered holistically and comprehensively.

A selective focus on certain space threats at the expense of others is counter-productive.

Mr Chairman,

Space Situational Awareness is critical to ensuring that any multilateral regime on any aspect of PAROS, whether based on capabilities and behaviours; or both; legally binding or otherwise; is viable and is trusted by all.

India recognizes that verification of space capacities and behaviour continues to pose challenges. The means for an unbiased assessment that are accepted and understood by all uniformly, and that are immune to politicisation are a related matter of concern.

In this context, India has raised concerns about the subjectivity involved in determining behaviours, and their further classification into responsible and irresponsible. We are concerned about who makes these assessments; about how these assessments are made; and about the manner of application of such determinations.

Mr Chairman,

As a developing country, India believes that this OEWG should accord priority to scientific and technological exchanges and to access to technology for peaceful and legitimate purposes.

Mr Chairman,

Mandates of fora focussing on outer space security, and those relating to safety and sustainability must be respected.

Mr. Chairman,

India stands ready to contribute to global efforts to strengthen Outer Space security.

India is approaching these OEWG discussions with an open mind and a constructive attitude. We will judge proposals on merits.
