

Statement by India on “Further measures for PAROS including elements of legally binding and non-legally binding measures” at the Subsidiary Body 3, Conference on Disarmament, Geneva, 27 March 2025

Mr. Coordinator,

A central difference of opinion has existed and continues to exist on the subject of this Subsidiary Body’s work, resulting in distinct approaches to prevention of an arms race in outer space.

India has participated in the GGE on further practical measures on prevention of an arms race held in 2018-2019 and also the one in 2023-24 which resulted in the outcome report; and the OEWG on reducing space threats through norms, rules, and principles of responsible behavior held in 2022-2023.

With regard to the further measures for PAROS, which is the suggested topic for today, I would like to make the following points: -

1. India reaffirms 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.
2. The draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space proposed in CD/ 1985 in 2014 could be a basis for further discussions. An object or hardware-based approach has its merits.
3. India is also open to the development of universal and non-discriminatory non-binding norms and transparency and confidence building measures, as they can be complementary to a legally binding instrument. They may be negotiated within or outside a legally binding instrument. The TCBMs, however, are not a substitute for legally binding instrument or its core obligations.
4. Any instrument on PAROS and its constituent measures, should stem from the imperative that threats to safety, security and sustainability of outer space, considerations relating to misunderstandings, miscalculations, and misperceptions, as well as threshold for what may constitute a use of force, must be considered comprehensively.
5. A selective focus on certain space threats over others, and tailoring measures to address those while ignoring others, will hinder process of consensus building.
6. Any proposed measures on PAROS must be clear, practical and proven. They should be designed and applied in an objective manner. Concerns raised on the subjectivity of approaches on PAROS would require to be addressed.
7. Verification, which will flow naturally from the object and purpose of a possible treaty, needs to be examined from administrative, logistical, technical and political basis. Access to relevant information and data that relates to situational awareness is an important factor. 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.

8. India, as a developing country, believes that outcomes in PAROS should not discourage the exchange of scientific and technological research and development for peaceful and legitimate purposes.
9. Mandates of various fora focussing on outer space security and safety and sustainability must be respected; overlaps and creation of multiples standards on the same set of issues should be avoided.
10. Last but not the least, it is our view that measures on PAROS should safeguard global security in a comprehensive manner, taking into account the evolving nature of space technology and the very nature of space domain, by investing in binding multilateral instruments, rather than interim and partial steps.

I thank you, Mr. Coordinator
