

**Statement by India on “Threats in the context of outer space” at the Subsidiary Body 3, Conference on Disarmament, Geneva, 13 February 2025**

**Mr. Coordinator**

Thank you for giving me the floor. Let me begin by congratulating you, and also thanking you, for coordinating Subsidiary Body 3. My delegation assures you of our support.

**Mr. Coordinator,**

India is a space-faring nation. We have a well-developed space programme with development and security dimensions. India believes that Outer Space belongs to all of us.

A central difference of opinion has existed and continues to exist on the subject of this Subsidiary Body’s work reflecting divergent approaches to Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.

India participated in the GGE on further practical measures on prevention of an arms race in outer space held in 2018-2019 and the one in 2023-2024, pursuant to resolution 77/250, which resulted in an outcome document. India also participated constructively in the OEWG on reducing space threats through norms, rules, and principles of responsible behaviour held in 2022-2023.

**Mr. Coordinator,**

India would like to reiterate our 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 proposed by China and Russia could be a useful basis for further discussions. We believe that an object or hardware-based approach has its merits.

**Mr. Coordinator,**

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. We believe, however, that they are not a substitute for legally binding instruments.

India recognizes that the OEWG on reducing space threats through responsible behaviour has done important work. It is however very much work in progress.

India believes 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 in Outer Space, must be considered comprehensively

India cannot support a selective focus on certain space threats over others.

We continue to have substantial concerns about the subjectivity involved in the determination of what constitutes what has been described as a behaviour, and its 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.

India recognizes that verification of space behaviour, including access to relevant information and data, poses challenges.

India, as a developing country, believes that the outcomes of any space security related process should not discourage the exchange of scientific and technological research and development for peaceful and legitimate purposes.

**Mr. Coordinator,**

Before concluding, my delegation acknowledges the establishment of the OEWG on prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, which has begun already under your able stewardship, and is scheduled to carry on its work for the next four years until 2028.

India will engage constructively within the OEWG and hopes that our discussions in Subsidiary body 3 will facilitate discussions in the OEWG in fulfilling its mandate and vice versa.

\*\*\*\*\*