STATEMENT BY
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DÉCLARATION DE
GILLIAN FROST
REPRÉSENTANTE DU CANADA

À LA PREMIÈRE COMMISSION DE LA 62ÈME SESSION
DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE

NEW YORK, LE 22 OCTOBRE 2007
Chair:

Canada was pleased to serve as Coordinator for the agenda item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space during discussions this year at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. The Coordinator report noted some preliminary conclusions, including: the need for improved implementation and universalization of existing outer space security agreements; the contribution of transparency and confidence-building measures in enhancing space security, and; support for more dialogue between the CD and COPUOS on areas of common interest. The elements for a treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space were also reviewed.

In addition to the CD, practical initiatives continue to be pursued on a range of space issues in various fora. We welcome the adoption by COPUOS of the debris mitigation guidelines. These will unquestionably help us in our common efforts to maintain open access to space for all.

Useful preliminary work is being done internationally on the question of possible space traffic management guidelines. This is to be encouraged, given the increasingly crowded nature of space, and the risks resulting from such increased activity.

Canada supports a range of efforts to increase transparency in space activities so as to contribute to confidence building efforts. In this respect, for instance, codes of conduct can serve as practical mechanisms to help define best practices and basic "rules of the road" for outer space.

Overall we remain convinced of the need to develop an increasingly broad and encompassing concept of space security that addresses not only the weaponization of outer space but also the broader military, environmental, commercial and civil dimensions of space. Practical steps towards achieving a common understanding of space security -- steps which include realistically attainable objectives -- can serve to set in place a foundation for a more comprehensive regime which may be built in the coming years.
Canada believes strongly that all nations share responsibility for ensuring that the continued access and use of outer space by the global community not be jeopardised by human actions. All states need to accept this common goal in the interests of future generations, or risk bringing the space age to an end when it has only really begun.

Ultimately, the cornerstone of a multilateral architecture for space security would be negotiation in the CD of an appropriately scoped, legally binding ban on space-based weapons. Canada welcomes the contribution that many delegations have made in the discussions to date on what such a negotiated treaty would look like and what it would need in terms of definitions, scope, verification, participation and so forth.

Chair:

Canada believes that the international community’s collective interest in preserving secure and sustainable access to and use of space, free of space-based threats, requires preventive diplomacy as well as discussion. Redoubling our efforts to build mutual confidence and ensure space security is our collective challenge. I am hopeful that our discussions here in the First Committee and subsequently in other fora, including the Conference on Disarmament, will move us closer to meeting that challenge.

Thank you.