Statement of

H.E. Ambassador/ Maged Abdelaziz
Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York

before

The First Committee
Thematic Debate: Outer Space (disarmament aspects)

New York, 22nd of October 2010  Check Against delivery
Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I wish to strongly commend the wisdom with which you have been guiding our work so far.

Since we are discussing outer space in the context of disarmament and international security, allow me to confirm Egypt's position that firmly believes in the importance of maintaining outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes. Egypt has thus traditionally presented along with Sri Lanka the draft resolution entitled “Prevention of an Arms race in outer space” and has regularly voted in favor of the resolution entitled “Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities” submitted by the Russian Federation.

The above-mentioned draft resolution, which Egypt tabled this year, is contained in document A/C.1/65/L.2 and is similar in substance to General Assembly resolution 64/28 — which was submitted by Sri Lanka and adopted last year under the same agenda item — except for the necessary technical updates. A significant number of States have sponsored the draft resolution so far, and it remains open for further co-sponsorship. We encourage delegations to cosponsor this draft resolution for what it represents in achieving progress in PAROS.

Since it is in the interest of all mankind that outer space remains exclusively for peaceful purposes, this draft resolution addresses an issue of particular importance. It emphasizes the importance of strict compliance with existing agreements, including bilateral agreements, related to outer space and with the legal regime concerning the use of outer space. It reaffirms that further measures should be examined in the search for effective and verifiable bilateral and multilateral agreements in order to prevent an arms race in outer space, including the weaponization of outer space.
Through this draft resolution, the Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral forum with a primary mandate to negotiate multilateral agreements, is once again invited, in the context of a balanced and comprehensive program of work, to establish a working group on the issue as early as possible during its 2011 session. That would permit the close examination, in the context of negotiations, of a number of important initiatives that have been put forward within the framework of the Conference, including the Russian-Chinese draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects (PPWT).

We look forward to seeing this draft resolution enjoy the widest possible level of support this year and call on those States that either voted against or abstained in the voting on last year’s resolution to reconsider their positions and to join the overwhelming majority of the members of the First Committee in supporting this year’s draft resolution, given the importance of this issue to the peace and security of humankind.

Thank You Mr. Chairman