STATEMENT

by Mr. Israil Tilegen, Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations

at the First Committee thematic discussion on "Outer Space" (disarmament aspects)

25 October 2010

New York
Mr. Chairman,

The Republic of Kazakhstan considers the prevention of an arms race in outer space as one of the most important and urgent tasks that need to be addressed by the international community. Today, the world has become increasingly dependent on space technology with the potential of highly disastrous effects caused by military confrontation and combat operation in space. The safety of outer space has been actively discussed in recent years and is particularly relevant in the context of an increasing number of countries involved in and dependent on space programmes, which if not adequately monitored, could lead to catastrophic consequences. Kazakhstan joins other Member States in the call for the peaceful exploration of space which could be constructively channeled to solve global problems through the improved use of energy and information, the management of natural resources, environmental conservation and averting natural disasters or considerably reducing their impact. Kazakhstan is convinced that security in outer space has to remain one of central issues of the Conference on Disarmament, which must be revitalized and revived in this coming year through greater determined multilateral political consensus to address this and other issues.

At a time when the world is moving towards global understanding, it is obvious that placing weapons in outer space will result in an advantage for the few, thus generating walls of distrust and suspicion, which we are only now beginning to break down with regard to nuclear and other weapons. What is more dangerous is that action by some countries with advanced space warfare technology can result in non-proliferation by other countries also wanting to acquire it. Past experience has proved that such theatre of military action can be concealed, thus becoming a major breach of international security. Presently, more than 130 countries possess sophisticated space programmes, or are developing them, using information from
space assets for their own defence. Member States need to ensure that such
dangerous weapons systems do not undermine the existing structure of agreements
on arms limitation, particularly, in the nuclear-missile sphere.

Kazakhstan has no intention of pursuing the development of space weapons,
or deploying them in outer space, now or in the future. My country, which hosts
the first and largest cosmodrome on its territory, the Baikonur, is actively
developing a national civilian space programme, including the creation of a space
rocket complex, called Baiterek. This set-up will facilitate the country to become
part of the world market of space services and access to latest technologies within
the norms of international collective security.

In July 2005, Kazakhstan acceded to the International Code of Conduct
against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, and is aspiring and actively working to join
the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). Although not a formal member
of the MTCR, Kazakhstan has strictly followed its regulations in its export policy
for the past several years, and hopes to gain the support and confidence of Member
States to make possible its bid for membership at the next session of the MTCR.

We call on Member States to exercise greater political vision, commitment
and consensus to overcome the challenges of new emerging threats with more
effective and innovative strategies. Only a collective effort of restraint and
international understanding can prevent countries from deploying weapons in
space.

Kazakhstan, therefore, supports the resolution, "Transparency and
confidence-building measures in outer space activities". A larger number of
sponsors and wider support for it will be the critical first step towards a universal
agreement to prevent the militarization of outer space and to ensure safety of space
objects. My country stands ready to cooperate with others to guarantee full
implementation of this resolution.
Kazakhstan also supports, and is of the conviction, that all states, especially those with space capabilities, must follow the Russian Federation's move of first non-deployment of weapons in outer space. Such restraint on the part of each individual state could significantly enhance collective collaboration and ward off the possibilities of an arms race in outer space before such a universal instrument is adopted.

Such collective determination would benefit the entire international community on the basis of fairness and equality, without any exception. Our past and current lessons with regard to challenges faced in the abolition and elimination of accumulated weapons of mass destruction, both nuclear and chemical, provide much evidence for the necessity to prevent similar obstacles for the elimination of space weapons and space debris in the future. Any shortsightedness would only detract our global limited financial resources from our cooperative programmes of sustainable development, which the United Nations is striving to accomplish.

To conclude, Kazakhstan would like to reinforce that our common goal is to ensure that space must remain a sphere of cooperation, free from weapons, so that humankind can continue to use it for its peaceful development and advancement.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.