EU Statement

By
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at the

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Thematic discussion on Outer Space
(agenda items 89 to 107)

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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY-
I have the honor to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland+ and Serbia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

1. The EU and its Member States have a longstanding position in favour of the preservation of a safe and secure space environment and peaceful uses of outer space on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis. Strengthening the safety, security, and long-term sustainability of activities in outer space is in a common interest and a key priority for the European Union, it contributes to the development and security of States.

2. Preventing outer space from becoming an area of conflict is essential for strengthening strategic stability. To this end, we aim at promoting international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

3. Space assets, operated by an increasing number of governmental and non-governmental entities, offer the world enormous benefits unimaginable just a few decades ago. Today these benefits are accompanied by significant challenges stemming from dangerous orbital debris and thus the potential of destructive collisions, the crowding of satellites, inter alia, in geo-stationary orbit, the growing saturation of the radio-frequency spectrum, as well as the threat of deliberate disruption. All outer space activities can be affected by those challenges. These call for the serious involvement of current and future space-using and space-faring countries to ensure greater safety, security and sustainability in outer space.

4. The need for transparency and confidence building measures in outer space activities has significantly increased. Existing instruments, such as the Hague Code of Conduct, show that TCBMs can improve security and mutual understanding between states. Following UN General Assembly resolutions 61/75 and 62/43 on “Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures (TCBMs) in Outer Space Activities” and in response to the request by the UN Secretary General to UN members for "concrete proposals" on TCBMs, the EU introduced in September 2007 the proposal for a voluntary Space Code of Conduct aimed at promoting TCBMs. The European Union presented on 5 June 2012, at a multilateral meeting in Vienna, a draft for an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities. The EU has subsequently held extensive bilateral and multilateral discussions concerning this draft, culminating in the first round of Open-ended Consultations held in Kiev from 16 - 17 May 2013. Following these consultations, the EU has presented a revised draft, dated 16 September 2013, which is proposed for further discussion at the next round of Open-ended Consultations to take place from 20-22 November, 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand. This latest draft introduces changes based on the comments and

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* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
+ Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.
suggestions we received during and after the Consultations in Kiev. The EU calls on all
interested States to continue to actively engage in this process towards an International
Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities.

5. With its proposal for a Space Code of Conduct, the EU supports the notion that voluntary
rules of the road offer a pragmatic approach to achieving, and strengthening, adherence to
norms of behavior in space. The draft Code seeks to achieve enhanced safety, security,
and sustainability in space by emphasizing that space activities should involve a high
degree of transparency with the aim of building confidence among space actors
worldwide. As an overarching political initiative, it provides an effective framework to
fulfill these objectives. The ultimate goal of this process is to garner the broadest possible
support for a Code of Conduct which should be adopted by an act of international
endorsement, e.g. in the context of a diplomatic conference.

6. Since its initial presentation, the EU has actively sought to raise awareness concerning
this initiative and has led the multilateral process. In this context, UNIDIR, supported by
the EU, has organised a series of regional seminars in Kuala Lumpur, Addis Ababa,
Mexico City and Astana and further meetings are foreseen for the Middle East and South
Asia.

Mr, Chairman,

7. We welcome the report of the Secretary General containing the Study by the Group of
Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer
Space Activities, as requested by UNGA Resolution 65/68. We express our gratitude to
the GGE Chair, Mr. Viktor Vasiliev for his efforts and leadership.

8. We welcome the endorsement by the Group of Experts of efforts to pursue political
commitments – including a multilateral Code of Conduct – to encourage responsible
actions, and a peaceful use of outer space. We will continue to actively support the
creation of Transparency and Confidence Building Measures (TCBMs) in Outer Space
Activities, inter alia by continuing to promote and work towards the adoption of an
International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities.

9. Finally, Mr Chairman, We support the draft Resolution A/C.1/68/L 40 tabled jointly by
China, Russia and the United States, which will be co-sponsored by all EU Member
States.