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**MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Statement by H.E. Amb. Hu Xiaodi**  
**Head of Chinese Delegation**  
**at the Thematic Debate**  
**of the First Committee of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of**  
**the United Nations General Assembly**  
**on**  
**Outer Space**

(New York, 12 October 2005)

Mr. Chairman,

Like land, sea and air, outer space has become an inseparable part of human life. The progress and development in various fields of human society, including economy, culture, technology and others, have been closely linked with the peaceful use of outer space. Outer space systems play a vital role in many important areas such as telecommunications, navigation, meteorology and remote sensing. In recent years, especially, such natural disasters as tsunami and typhoon have rendered so much tragedy to humankind, that the international community has paid more and more attention to the role of outer space in catastrophe early warning, and has strengthened international cooperation in information exchanges.

However, historical experience has shown that the development of science and technology, if not properly guided, can also bring calamity to human beings. Used to seek military superiority or to wage wars, advanced space technology will seriously endanger the peace and security in outer space and jeopardize the happiness and welfare of mankind. Unfortunately, some trends in outer space indicate that such a possibility is becoming true. Currently, certain warfare concepts and theories such as “control over space, occupation of space” are being codified. The R&D on space weapons is also being carried out. Thus, the danger of the weaponization of outer space is becoming imminent more than ever.

Outer space is the common heritage of all mankind. Space assets should promote rather than undermine the peace, welfare and development of the world. It is both the right and obligation of all countries to ensure the peaceful use of outer space and prevent the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space. Therefore, we must not wait until outer space weapons have been deployed and started to cause damages. It would be too late if one country takes the lead to usher weapons into outer space, with other States following the suit. It is urgent to do what is necessary to prevent the proliferation of space weapons. The key to this end is to take preventive measures. Otherwise, the right to peaceful use of outer space and the safety of outer space assets will be put in jeopardy.

Over years, international community has endeavored on many fronts to prevent the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space. The Conference on Disarmament (CD) at Geneva had set up the ad hoc committee for ten consecutive years from 1985 to 1994 discussing outer space issues. The UN General Assembly has, for many years without interruption, overwhelmingly adopted the resolution of “Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space”. Many governments, civil society and academic institutes have put forward numerous constructive proposals. We appreciate those efforts, and we appeal to all countries to join this process to contribute to the security of outer space.

The Chinese delegation is of the view that, as the mandated body by the United Nations for negotiations on disarmament and arms control treaties, the Conference on Disarmament (CD) is the best venue for negotiating and concluding a legal instrument to prevent the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space. And we urge the CD to start substantial work at an early date. In 2002, China and Russia, along with Vietnam, Indonesia, Belarus, Zimbabwe and Syria, tabled in the CD a working paper entitled “POSSIBLE ELEMENTS FOR A FUTURE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL AGREEMENT ON THE PREVENTION OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF WEAPONS IN OUTER SPACE, THE THREAT OR USE OF FORCE AGAINST OUTER SPACE OBJECTS”. Later, China and Russia jointly distributed three thematic non-papers. It is our hope that the CD can take these documents as a basis for negotiating and concluding a new outer space legal instrument.

Mr. Chairman,

Humankind has entered a new century. Peace, development and cooperation have become the trend of our times. Early conclusion of an international legal instrument to prevent the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space will contribute to the peaceful use of outer space, protect the safety of space assets, facilitate relevant international cooperation and enhance the common security of all countries. Let us join our efforts to maintain a peaceful and serene outer space free of weapons and warfare.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.