

SWEDEN

## **Prevention of an arms race in outer space**

Mr. President

Let me first extend my country's warmest congratulations to you on the assumption of the Presidency and assure you of our full cooperation and support of your endeavor to start substantive work in the CD.

Outer Space must be preserved for peaceful purposes. The potential threat posed by weaponization of Outer Space and the risk of a subsequent arms race are of great concern to my country. The exploration and use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies must be assured as the province of all mankind. While acknowledging the positive role that space technology can play in meeting the global challenges, it is also a powerful tool not only for welfare but also for warfare.

The legal regime for Outer Space provides fundamental rules on international responsibility and liability for national space activities both civil, military and for national security purposes. We are open to consider suggestions on different ways to strengthening this regime.

Sweden supports the establishment of an ad hoc committee in the CD to deal with outer space.

We would suggest – as a first step – that time be allocated in the CD for informal technical meetings involving a wider range of actors in the space field for example from international organizations, space agencies, space law and the private sector. The overall space sector, both civil and military, involves different stakeholders, and it would therefore be fruitful to get their different perspectives. Since space activities often are of a dual-use nature and involve cross-cutting issues between civil and military activities, future work would benefit from an over all perspective. It would also be useful in order to delineate what can be usefully done in the CD and what should be, or are being done in other fora. In so doing we would have to take into account important work currently going on in the UN and elsewhere. The CD should come in where there is a need to complement and fill the gaps in the existing regimes as regards aspects of security, military and weaponization, including the strengthening of existing instruments and the possibility of further legislation. It is our sincere hope that this work can commence without any further delay.