



2025 UNGA First Committee

Thematic Cluster statement: Outer Space

Delivered by Sarah-Rose Williams, Senior Advisor, New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations

27 October 2025

Chair,

In 2024, New Zealand hosted the third-highest number of orbital launches worldwide. We take our responsibilities as a launching state seriously. We are committed to ensuring that space activity taking place in New Zealand is conducted safely, responsibly, and sustainably.

We believe outer space must be governed in a way that reflects the international community's collective interests and responsibilities. This includes ensuring that all states – regardless of size or capability – can participate meaningfully in shaping the future of space governance.

We remain committed to reducing the risk of conflict in space, particularly through the development of norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour. We also contribute to efforts to apply international space law to emerging activities, such as debris removal and on-orbit servicing – work that is essential to maintaining a safe and sustainable space environment.

New Zealand welcomes the momentum generated by recent multilateral processes – especially the successive Open-Ended Working Groups on responsible behaviours and on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

It is essential that we continue to deepen our shared understanding and build convergence on key issues, including:

- The applicability of international law, including international humanitarian law, to outer space activities;
- The protection of space systems that deliver critical civilian services, or those critical to preservation of international security;
- The importance of transparency and information-sharing to support the development of future legally binding instruments.

Chair, we remain concerned by proposals that risk fragmenting the multilateral space security architecture or creating disproportionate challenges for smaller states.

Despite encouraging progress, New Zealand remains deeply concerned about activities that could jeopardise the safe and predictable use of outer space. We reiterate our call for all States to abide by their international commitments stemming from the Outer Space Treaty.

New Zealand recognises the valuable role of COPUOS in supporting an effective international legal framework that enables the growth of the global space sector and facilitates international cooperation.

New Zealand will continue to champion an inclusive and multistakeholder approach to space governance, in an effort to build a space environment that is safe and sustainable, for the benefit of all.

Thank you, Chair.