

Statement by Norway
Outer Space (Cluster III)

**First Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations at its 80th
session**

Chair,

All states must remain committed to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space and conduct their activities in accordance with international law. States must refrain from activities that could threaten the ability of states to freely use and explore outer space, now and in the future. Space should be maintained as a peaceful, safe, stable, secure, and sustainable environment for the benefit of all.

Full compliance with the Outer Space Treaty remains as important as ever, not least its obligation not to place in orbit any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction. Weapons of mass destruction for use in space, and the means of delivery for such weapons, should not be developed in the first place.

We welcome the merged Open-Ended Working Group on preventing an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. We reiterate the importance of it properly addressing space threats through norms, rules, and principles of responsible behavior. Threat reduction should be our primary objective. Behaviors that reduce threats, reduce the incentive to race for arms. This approach continues to offer a way towards a legally binding instrument, political commitments, or both.

We recognize the important and growing interests of non-governmental actors with regard to space activities. A multi-stakeholder approach must be maintained to secure their input.

We all agree that the UN Charter applies to the conduct of states in outer space. So, too does international humanitarian law. Recognizing this does not legitimize the use of force in outer space. The applicability of humanitarian law does not diminish the obligation of states to refrain from the threat or use of force whether in space or on Earth.

The Hague Code of Conduct against ballistic missile proliferation is an important transparency and confidence-building measure. We call on states to subscribe and implement its provisions, including pre-launch notifications.

As space activity continues to grow, we appear bound at times to find ourselves in situations that could increase the risk of conflict related to outer space. Therefore, we should seize the opportunity in this forum – and others – to work together on keeping these risks as small as possible.

Thank you