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Statement by

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Open-Ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats

United Nations, Geneva

28th August 2023

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

Israel would like to thank you, your team and the secretariat for all of your efforts to reach a common ground and achieve a substantial final report by consensus.

We would like to extend our congratulations to India and the Indian Space Research Organization for the successful landing of the Chandrayaan 3 mission on the south pole of the moon. We are looking forward to the findings of the scientific mission, as its success is the success of all humanity.

As we begin the last formal session of the Working Group, and prepare for the discussion on the final report, please allow us to make a few general comments:

Israel attaches great value to the Working Group and recognizes its value as a forum that promotes a greater understanding on various aspects of reduction of space threats during peacetime, and a forum which includes many relevant actors. We believe it is important to base the final report upon conclusions reached by consensus, reflecting the deliberations held by this Group.

We note that there seems to be wide agreement on certain notions, such as the notion that International Law applies to the activities of States in outer space, the importance of promoting international cooperation and trust-building measures, as well as regarding the importance of information sharing and de-escalation mechanisms. We think it's important that the report encapsulates these widely shared insights.

There is, however, disagreement regarding other issues. In this regard, among them, article 36 of the draft report lists numerous proposals for possible norms, rules and principles, many of which are highly controversial and widely contested. Israel along with other States has concerns regarding many of these proposals, and generally maintains that it would be inappropriate and premature to include them in the final report. While Israel sees merit in States considering further proposals for norms, the list of recommendations stipulated in the draft has not been sufficiently discussed by the Working Group and requires further analysis.

Mr. Chair,

We would also like to reiterate Israel's view that existing international law applies to State activity in outer space, and provides a sufficient legal framework to address such activity. Israel would like to highlight the importance of the final report reflecting this legal situation, as well as reflecting that the report's conclusions and recommendations are without prejudice to existing international law.

Israel also has specific comments, regarding the proposed text of the report, which will be presented further on in discussions.

We would like to extend our gratitude once again to you, Chair, for the leadership you have displayed throughout the OEWG process. Israel hopes that the final report will fully acknowledge the complexity of the issue at hand, and the need for a thorough, gradual and meticulous process that builds a stable foundation for the continuation of the conversation on the subject. This will allow the Members of the group to address any suggestions for possible norms with a responsible and prudent approach.

I thank you Mr. Chairperson, and I wish us all a fruitful week.