



**Statement delivered by Ambassador Ichiro Ogasawara,
Permanent Representative of the Delegation of Japan to the
Conference on Disarmament**

**Third Session of the Open-Ended Working Group on reducing space
threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviors**

30th January 2023

Mr. Chair,

Distinguished colleagues,

First of all, I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the leadership shown and the tireless efforts undertaken by you, Ambassador LAGOS in chairing this important meeting. Please let me reassure you of the full support from the Japanese Delegation. Japan is strongly committed to maintaining outer space as a peaceful, safe, stable, secure and sustainable environment and advancing discussions on reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviors as a practical way forward in advancing the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS).

Japan welcomes and supports the 10 topics put forward by the Chair to guide our discussions throughout this third session, which will be of great assistance for us continuing our work in a constructive manner. In order to contribute to the laudable efforts led by the Chair, Japan has circulated a working paper with our concrete proposals of possible norms with regard to

responsible behaviors in order to facilitate the process of forging consensus on tangible results at the OEWG.

In order to promote discussions this week, let me share Japan's key takeaways from the previous sessions as well as views regarding the agenda for this third session. In the previous sessions, the increasing reliance on space for our daily lives and security and the pressing need to address space security in light of the rapid developments in the space domain were widely shared. Furthermore, the importance of taking into account the blurring distinction between civilian and military assets and services, that is to say their dual-use nature, as well as the dual-purpose concept relating to the space system were also highlighted.

In the second session of this OEWG, various views on threats related to outer space systems were expressed. Japan considers that a comprehensive and holistic approach is necessary to reduce space threats and highly values the inclusive nature of this OEWG, which brings together views of relevant states and stakeholders.

As we proceed with discussions on possible norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviors in outer space, it may be worthwhile to first address the most pressing issues and continue discussion on issues that merit further examination. During this third session of the OEWG, Japan believes that the following two key considerations should guide our deliberations to ensure effective outcomes.

First, in our current exercise of identifying responsible and irresponsible behaviors, it is important to secure the long-term sustainability of and free future access to outer space as the basis for all space activities. This is also in line with Article I of the Outer Space Treaty, which stipulates that, “The exploration and use of outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and shall be the province of all mankind. Outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, shall be free for exploration and use by all States without discrimination of any kind, on a basis of equality and in accordance with international law, and there shall be free access to all areas of celestial bodies”.

From this standpoint, Japan considers that behaviors that generate a considerable amount of long-lived debris, especially if they arise from deliberate destruction of space systems, would threaten the sustainability of and free access to outer space. Such behaviors should constitute a priority issue for this OEWG to address, as they affect space systems indiscriminately, causing collateral damages not only to the current but also future space users. In this regard, Japan reiterates its commitment not to conduct destructive, direct-ascent anti-satellite (DA-ASAT) missile testing as a first step in articulating responsible behaviors. A relevant resolution was adopted at the 77th session of the General Assembly with an overwhelming majority, demonstrating wide support for this important step. The process of formulating and accumulating such common recognition on norms, rules and principles could lead to the formulation of legally binding instruments in the future, as we have seen in the development of the Outer Space Treaty.

Second, reaching a common recognition on voluntary pragmatic TCBMs could reduce misunderstanding and miscalculation that may lead to escalation of an arms race. Such steps do not undermine existing international law or other normative frameworks, but rather complement and reinforce them.

Mr. Chair,

As all states are reliant on space, we believe that the inclusive process of this OEWG is well suited for deepening and fostering common recognition of the importance of reducing space threats. We look forward to achieving tangible outcomes at this OEWG that enable the international community to address the imminent challenges it faces.

Thank you for your kind attention, Mr. Chair.

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