



STATEMENT BY MALAYSIA

AT THE FOURTH OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON REDUCING SPACE THREATS THROUGH NORMS, RULES AND PRINCIPLES OF RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOURS

28 AUGUST - 1 SEPTEMBER 2023

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, allow me to express my delegation's appreciation to you for steering the work of the OEWG since its first session. Malaysia assures you of our full support and cooperation.

2. Malaysia holds the view that outer space and other celestial bodies are the common heritage of humankind. Outer space must be used, explored and utilised for peaceful purposes only, and shall be carried out for the benefit, and in the interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development.

3. As a responsible space actor, Malaysia remains committed to support the international legal framework in ensuring the peaceful exploration and use of the outer space.

Mr. Chair,

4. Malaysia believes that there is an urgent need to address the serious concern raised by various States regarding possible militarisation of outer space. Malaysia also believes that we need to address how to avoid behaviour that can be construed as threats as well as to mitigate accidents, miscommunication or lack of transparency which could lead to miscalculations and the escalation of tensions and arms race.

5. Malaysia echoes the legitimate concerns that existing legal instruments are inadequate to meet the needs of today's spacefaring and space-reliance communities. Therefore, we believe there is a need to consolidate, reinforce and enhance the existing legislations by immediately commencing the negotiation of a legally-binding instrument for the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS).

6. Malaysia recognises that there have been efforts in this regard in the past. However, due to diplomatic hurdles, such efforts have not been able to reach consensus amongst the international community.

7. In light of this, Malaysia took the position to support the mandate of this OEWG, through UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/76/231, with a view that the OEWG would contribute to elaboration of a legally-binding instrument on PAROS in the future. We share the view that any voluntary and non-legally-binding measure cannot be a substitute to a legally binding treaty on PAROS.

Mr. Chair,

8. Malaysia welcomes the draft report that has been circulated and believes that it is important for the OEWG to consider the following:

- First, **to ensure that the overall process of the OEWG is transparent and inclusive.**
- Second, even though States may have diverging views on some issues, it is vital **to ensure that this initiative receives consensual support from all member states, particularly the major players in outer space.** Without the support from these States, the effectiveness of this initiative will be limited.
- Third, in relation to the elements under the norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours, we underscore that all norms, rules and principles to be outlined by this Group must respect the principle of ensuring that **outer**

space is used, explored and utilised for peaceful purposes only, and shall be carried out for the benefit, and in the interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development. Any forms of weapons and activities that threaten the peaceful, safe, stability, security and sustainable environment of outer space must be prohibited.

- Fourth, while the established space actors may have diverse and in-depth knowledge and experience in outer space, it is paramount **to identify and address the concern and challenges faced by the emerging space actors and the common issues faced by both, established and emerging space actors in outer space.**
- Fifth, **there is a need to identify a clear distinction on what needs to be controlled, whether it is the technology or how such technology is used.** This is important in view of the dual-use nature of the technology.
- Sixth, regardless of whether there is technically an 'arms race', **it is critical to understand the effect and repercussions of interfering with space systems considering that space will continue to be used for military purposes.**
- Seventh, with regard to notifications of military operations and exercise, we would like to qualify that this must not in any way hamper operations and responsibility in defending national sovereignty.

Mr. Chair,

9. In closing, we look forward to a productive discussion and successful outcome of this final OEWG.

Thank you.