



CZECH REPUBLIC

Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations

79th Session of the General Assembly

First Committee: Cluster 3 – Outer Space

Statement by

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New York, 29 October 2024

As delivered

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Thank you Chair, distinguished delegates,

Czechia fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and would like to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

The use of outer space for peaceful purposes remains in the interest of all nations. Technological developments in the space domain have created new opportunities, with an increasing number of states, businesses and individuals being able to place objects into orbit and beyond. With these opportunities come new risks and vulnerabilities. The specific dual-use nature of space technologies poses particular risks to the non-proliferation architecture. That is why we believe that reducing space threats is best addressed through a behavioral approach, specifically by establishing norms of responsible behavior.

We continue to promote the principle that the free exploration and use of outer space shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interest of all nations. But threats to space-based systems are increasing, with certain activities possibly restricting access and freedom to operate in outer space. For these reasons, preventing an arms race in outer space in all its aspects is one of our top priorities and we fully support the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats Through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours. It is in this context that we support the merger of the two OEWDs, provided that both mandates are preserved in an equitable and inclusive manner, while ensuring a multi-stakeholder approach.

Chair,

It is regrettable that Russia is going in the opposite direction to the global consensus – militarizing outer space with counter-space weapons, conducting destructive and reckless anti-satellite missile tests, and aiming to place a nuclear weapon in space. If Russia persists on this course of action, it will not only violate the Outer Space Treaty, but also threaten the ability of all States to explore and use outer space for peaceful purposes.

This year, Russia vetoed a resolution at the UNSC that called on States not to develop nuclear weapons and other WMDs specifically designed to be placed in orbit. The resolution simply reflected that placing a nuclear weapon into orbit would violate article

IV of the Outer Space Treaty, be fundamentally at odds with the aims of the NPT and threaten the peaceful use of outer space by all States. We urge all states to support the current resolution on Weapons of Mass Destruction in Outer Space and to promote the development of norms of responsible behavior in outer space.

Chair,

Space-based assets are integral enablers of world trade, finance and economic growth, forming a critical part of our global supply chains. Our goal is therefore clear – to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects to ensure that everyone can continue to share the benefits of the peaceful use of outer space.

Thank you, Chair.