



**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT MISSION OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF TURKIYE**

**Open-ended working group on reducing space threats through norms,  
rules, and principles of responsible behaviours**

**Geneva, 9-13 May 2022**

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

We would like to congratulate you on assuming the Chairmanship of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Space Threats. You can count on our delegation's support in your endeavours.

Türkiye gives utmost importance to protecting the right to unrestricted access to and use outer space for peaceful purposes.

With this understanding, we co-sponsored the UN General Assembly Resolution 76/231.

We welcome the creation of the OEWG on reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours by the said Resolution and will constructively contribute to its activities.

Mr. Chairperson,

In 2018, the Turkish Space Agency is established in order to build national facilities and acquire technologies that will enable independent national access to space by developing the aerospace and aviation industry.

In line with the activities of the Turkish Space Agency, the National Space Programme is also adopted as a comprehensive document that consists of several peaceful strategic objectives, including Moon Mission, Access to Space and Space Port, Satellite Production Activities, and Observing and Monitoring Space Objects from the Earth.

Türkiye will continue to actively engage in many of these objectives through international coordination and cooperation, fully in line with the international law regulating outer space.

Mr. Chairperson,

We believe that the continued development, testing and proliferation of anti-satellite weapons exacerbate risks in outer space. Destructive anti-satellite missile tests create space debris and threaten peaceful outer space activities.

With this in mind, we welcome the recent announcement by the US authorities of the commitment not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing.

Fifty-five years after the signing (1967), the Treaty on the Principles for the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, continues to constitute the cornerstone of the global governance of outer space.

On the other hand, the said agreement prohibits only placing nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction in orbit, installing such weapons on celestial bodies, or stationing such weapons in outer space.

Emerging threats, such as increasing the number of debris in orbit, congestion caused by the entrance of new actors, cyber-attacks, directed energy weapons (such as lasers, microwaves and particle beams) and anti-satellite weapons, remain to be addressed with utmost caution.

Our substantive discussions on the prevention of arms race in outer space (PAROS) at the Conference on Disarmament are good steps to have a better common understanding on such issues as peaceful use of outer space and reducing space threats.

To safeguard the peaceful use of space for the next generations and promote our common good of reducing space threats to a minimum level, we need to work in collaboration and good faith within this Group.

We also believe that our work in this OEWG also directly relates with the efforts of promoting international peace and security as well as our collective goal towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and beyond.

Mr. Chairperson,

We believe that within this OEWG, we should prioritize determining consensus-based norms, rules, and principles of responsible behaviours to prevent an arms race in outer space.

We need to develop a shared understanding of how existing international law applies to outer space activities.

In order to contribute to our discussions on reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours, Türkiye would like to present the following suggestions to be considered by the OEWG:

- Contact lists for emergencies should be made.
- Direct communications channels must be established to avoid misunderstandings and miscalculations.
- Every potential dangerous on-orbit situation must be conveyed via these channels in advance.
- Exchange of information, transparency and situational awareness among States should be increased.
- Experiences and best practices should be shared.
- Anti-satellite capabilities, which can cause debris, must not be developed, tested or used.
- Laser weapons must not be used against satellites for their loss of sight.

Before we end our remarks, we wish you all to have a successful session which could be a positive step for the well-being of future generations.

Thank you.