



## **DEU concluding intervention**

Mr. Chair,

I would like to thank you for your guidance and leadership over the course of this first substantive session, which has enabled a rich and constructive discussion on the pressing security challenges in outer space.

And I would like to thank Colleagues for their insightful and stimulating contributions which have provided ample food for thought.

Looking back at our first session, I believe we should take stock of the wide range of commonalities that characterized our discussions. I would like to make four points:

First, responsible behaviours are a pragmatic approach to increase stability and predictability and to foster transparency in order to create conditions where risk of escalation and conflict in space are mitigated and states have no incentive for contesting outer space or engaging in arms races. In this sense, our work here is an essential contribution to wider efforts on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Second, we share the understanding that international law, including the UN Charter and international humanitarian law applies in outer space – and I take note of the position expressed by one delegation as regards the application of

international humanitarian law. We also share the objective to strengthen the application and implementation of the Outer Space Treaty as the foundation of the rules based order in outer space.

Third, our discussions exposed challenges specific to the space environment for the application of existing international law, including complex questions of dual-use. Civil capabilities and technologies might be misused with the aim to damage space systems. Two examples, which were mentioned several times, are rendez-vous and close proximity operations and satellites with robotic arms.

The excellent panel discussion on Tuesday outlined a wide range of scenarios for the use of force against space objects, which made clear that the legal assessment of such actions is primarily looking at the effects caused, rather than the means used.

In this vein, Germany believes that threats in outer space cannot be deduced from objects or capabilities alone. Instead, we need to look primarily at the effects caused by certain behaviours.

We are thus looking forward to extend this analysis of space threats, as a better understanding of threats will benefit the application of the existing legal framework as well as the formulation of responsible behaviours.

Fourth, our discussions showed that responsible behaviours can be both complementary to legally binding instruments as well as a preparatory step towards the negotiation of them.

As a first step, however, we need a common understanding on the security threats and risks and on what constitutes responsible and irresponsible behaviours.

We therefore look forward to our next session and an analysis of current and future threats to space systems and the continuation of the constructive, incremental and inclusive process offered by this Open-Ended Working Group.

Thank you.