



PHILIPPINES

**United Nations General Assembly
Open-Ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats Through Norms,
Rules, and Principles of Responsible behavior
12 September 2022**

**Agenda Item 6(b): To Consider Current and Future Space Threats by States to
Space Systems, and Actions, Activities and Omissions That Could Be
Considered Irresponsible**

**Exchange of Views on the Outcome of the Second Session and
Outlook Towards the Third Session**

Statement

*Delivered by Mr. Jonelle John S. Domingo,
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Mister Chair,

My delegation congratulates you for your successful steering of the second session of the open-ended working group. We thank the secretariat for the excellent arrangements and the panelists who generously lent their expertise.

We had anticipated this session to be challenging given that there are sensitivities that are difficult to avoid when characterizing irresponsible behaviors. Yet the manner with which you structured our work has created an enabling environment that allowed delegations to engage constructively. We commend your professionalism and excellent leadership.

In today's session, we reached a measure of understanding of how various states perceive current and future earth-to-space, space-to-space, space-to-earth, earth-to-earth threats to space systems. This is a valuable first step towards addressing the insufficiency of understanding of mutual threat perceptions, and therefore constitutes an invaluable transparency and confidence-building measure.

We wish to take this opportunity to highlight the points we derived from our discussions this week:

1. Our constructive discussions validates our aspiration for a legally binding and multilaterally verifiable instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space,

including the prohibition of the placement of weapons in outer space and the prohibition on the threat or use of force against outer space objects.

2. At the same time, the diffusion of space-based technologies and their use in modern societies has made it necessary to start addressing security risks and threats in outer space. Our conversation on outer space security therefore needs to evolve and transcend traditional strategic paradigms. Our work to clarify our varying threat perceptions and reach a common understanding of what could constitute irresponsible or threatening behavior is crucial.
3. As ASEAN stated, any initiatives in this regard should also take into account the inherent right to peaceful uses of space technologies. They should therefore not hamper innovation. In this regard, it is important to emphasize that risks and threats do not necessarily arise from capabilities, which are in themselves value-neutral. Indeed, some of these capabilities could advance efforts to promote the long-term sustainability of space. It is clear that the important consideration when examining the drivers of risks and threats is behavior.
4. While there remains a measure of subjectivity with regard to perceptions of behavior, such subjectivity can be alleviated through transparency, communications, and consultations. These are already encouraged by international space law, but they need supplemental elaboration and operationalization.
5. There is a clear overlap between our work here and the workstream related to cyber security, and there are areas where we can take inspiration from some of the outcomes of that workstream. Similarly, some of the aspects of our work here pertains to issues of safety, which falls within the remit of COPUOUS. It is important that our work is informed by what is happening in COPUOUS, and vice versa. As our discussions this week indicate, safety and security are two sides of the same coin. If safety hazards result in consequences that bear upon national security interests of a state as it perceives them, then these hazards become a security concern.

These considerations prepare us for the next session, where we will have an opportunity to clarify what constitutes responsible behavior in space.

The Philippines reiterates that the duty of “due regard,” which is a legal obligation required by the Outer Space Treaty but whose development precedes the said treaty, is the foundational principle that will guide our consideration of what constitutes responsible behavior in space. We hope that we can continue our conversation to further unpack this principle.

Mister Chair,

We see our work to fulfill the mandate of the OEWG as a necessary journey towards future-proofing our rules-based international order. There is much at stake, and we must make sure that this journey does not go off tracks. We are confident with you as our driver, and we fully support your vision for how our conversation should be structured as we progress in our work.

We look forward to an inclusive conversation that takes into account all perspectives, including those from developing countries and nascent spacefaring countries. We encourage delegations to transcend differences in political outlooks and bridge differences in understandings by asking the right questions and addressing such questions with an open mind. We must sharpen our convergences and demonstrate that multilateralism works.

You can count on the Philippines to continue engaging constructively in this regard.

I thank you, Mister Chair.