



Statement by Sri Lanka

Second session of the open-ended working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, 21-25 July 2025, Palais des Nations, Geneva

Item 5 – General Exchange of Views

Mr. Chair

Sri Lanka also joins other delegations in appreciating your leadership as the Chair of this Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG). I extend Sri Lanka's fullest support and cooperation for the success of the deliberations of the Working Group.

Sri Lanka appreciates your leadership during the first session of the OEWG as well as during the informal consultations and guidance to the second session.

Mr. Chair,

The discussions on prevention of an arms race in outer space are not new to us. We have been discussing the related issues over decades. Therefore, rather than starting from scratch, the OEWG can leverage from where we are, while building on existing discussions and efforts in multilateral fora.

We believe that this working group provides an opportunity for Member States to advance discussions on both legally binding and non-legally binding measures in outer space disarmament under a single framework.

Sri Lanka has been engaging for decades on the matters of prevention of an arms race in outer space, and has been advocating for a legally binding instrument. We also wish to underline the vital importance of verification mechanisms as an integral part of a legally binding instrument. While understanding the current dynamics in space faring activities by States, we believe that this fundamental goal has to be achieved in a balanced and inclusive approach under a comprehensive framework, which recognizes the concerns of all States, and works on the basis of consensus.

The UNGA resolution 79/19 titled 'prevention of an arms race in outer space' which is annually presented by Sri Lanka together with Egypt emphasizes "the paramount importance of strict compliance with existing arms limitation and disarmament agreements relevant to outer space, including bilateral agreements, and with the existing legal regime concerning the use of outer space"

The resolution also emphasizes “the necessity of further measures with appropriate and effective provisions for verification to prevent an arms race in outer space” while referring to the important work carried out so far in multilateral fora on outer space disarmament.

From the point where we are today, we all need to strive to agree on a pragmatic way forward to achieve our common goals in outer space disarmament in all aspects.

Sri Lanka also takes this opportunity to underscore that weaponizing of outer space would disproportionately affect all states. We urge this Working Group therefore to adequately listen to the voice of the developing countries that rely on peaceful uses of outer space and space-based assets, particularly satellite technology for communication, disaster management, and climate impact monitoring and resilience. Sri Lanka encourages regional consultations and dialogues particularly among the non-spacefaring states with a view to ensure inclusivity.

Mr. Chair,

It is the responsibility of all States to ensure that outer space remains a shared heritage of humankind, free from conflict and accessible to all nations for peaceful purposes.

While reiterating Sri Lanka’s support to your efforts to bring us on to a pragmatic direction, we believe that a balanced, inclusive and consensus-based approach that considers the concerns of all states will be useful in achieving our common goals.

Thank you