*Delegation from Represented by*

Switzerland John Abbott College

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For the better part of the last century, space has been considered as the last frontier where an endless amount of opportunities and dangers lie ahead. With the benefits of becoming a space-faring nation widely known, countries and organizations around the world have invested massive sums into programs with the objective of advancing their capabilities in outer space. Switzerland is one such country with 26 billion Swiss francs or 36 billion Canadian dollars being invested into the sector from 2017 to 2020. Also as a member of the European Space agency, Switzerland has made various contributions to the program since the Apollo days including but not exclusively: atomic clocks, astronauts, scientific equipment, etc. Nevertheless, it is our nation’s belief that the activities in outer space must remain peaceful and continue to advance the cause of the entirety of humanity.

As the space programs of various emerging nations mature, the number of satellites coming online and falling into disrepair has increased exponentially. This has led to unfortunate accidents which are becoming harder to avoid with over 500 000 pieces of debris bigger than 10 cm in diameter and counting orbiting our planet. Switzerland is of the opinion that like on the surface of our planet that someone has to take responsibility for the cleanup of this new kind of pollution. Our delegation would like to highlight the efforts of the Swiss industry and academia to solve this problem with the development of CleanSpace One which would be the first attempt ever to deorbit an unused satellite. Switzerland also believes that as one of the 193 signatories of the Paris Agreement which is part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that particle pollution would have a negative effect on the progress being made in that direction.

With outer space becoming progressively more viable and important to the international community, it has also drawn the attention of the various military powers around the world. A few countries have started a miniature arms race, competing to deter each other from completely dominating what should be under international jurisdiction. Switzerland wishes to wholly stop the advent of weaponry in space in a continuation of Switzerland’s role as an international peacemaker. The nation of Switzerland would like to remind world powers of the UN Outer Space Treaty that guarantees the peaceful use of space and the passage of the “Prevention of Outer Space Arms Race” resolution in the year 2000. Furthermore, it should be noted that this sort of warfare may have dire consequences on civilians down on Earth which would be a violation of the international humanitarian law for a lack of distinction.

Keeping in mind that the commercial use of space has greatly contributed to the communications, transport and security sectors, Switzerland believes that there should be a coordinated effort to make use of this new territory as well as possible. The implementation of guidelines as a basis for increased international cooperation, the systematic sharing of information and a code of conduct for a responsible use of space would be to the advantage of all countries, space-faring or not. As a member of UN COPUOS, Switzerland has proposed various soft measures to encourage the fair use of what has become an essential part of modern society’s infrastructure.