



General Assembly

Distr.: General
28 December 2023

Seventy-eighth session

Agenda item 97 (c)

Prevention of an arms race in outer space: further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 22 December 2023

[*on the report of the First Committee (A/78/407, para. 15)*]

78/238. Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 71/31 and 71/32 of 5 December 2016, 71/90 of 6 December 2016, 72/250 of 24 December 2017, 73/6 of 26 October 2018, 73/91 of 7 December 2018, 74/34 of 12 December 2019, 76/230 of 24 December 2021 and 77/250 of 30 December 2022, and its decisions 73/512 of 5 December 2018 and 75/514 of 7 December 2020, as well as its other resolutions and decisions on this subject,

Expressing grave alarm over the threat of an arms race in outer space, which would impair the prospects for limiting and reducing armaments in general and erect insurmountable barriers to international cooperation in the peaceful exploration of outer space,

Recognizing the catastrophic consequences of an arms race in outer space, which should be used exclusively for peaceful and creative purposes, or any military conflicts in outer space and that the prevention of an arms race in outer space would avert a grave danger for international peace and security,

Emphasizing the importance of article IV of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies,¹

Bearing in mind that all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, should contribute actively to the prevention of an arms race in outer space with a view to promoting and strengthening international cooperation in the exploration and use

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 610, No. 8843.



of outer space for peaceful purposes, with the objective of shaping a community of shared future for humankind,

Recognizing that, while the existing international treaties related to outer space and the legal regime provided for therein play a positive role in regulating outer space activities, they are unable to fully prevent an arms race in outer space, the placement of weapons in outer space and the threat or use of force in outer space, from space against Earth and from Earth against objects in outer space, and preserve outer space for peaceful purposes, and that there is a need to consolidate and reinforce this regime,

Expressing serious concern over the plans declared by certain States that include placement of weapons, in particular strike combat systems, in outer space, the threat or use of force in outer space, from space against Earth and from Earth against objects in outer space and the use of outer space for combat operations,

Convinced that further measures should be examined in the search for effective and verifiable bilateral and multilateral agreements in order to prevent an arms race in outer space and preserve outer space for peaceful purposes,

Welcoming, in this regard, the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects, introduced by China and the Russian Federation at the Conference on Disarmament in 2008,² and the submission of its updated version in 2014,³

Stressing the importance of the political statements made by a number of States⁴ that they would not be the first to place weapons in outer space,

Recognizing the primary role and responsibility of the Conference on Disarmament in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space,

Taking into account the work done by the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space in 2018 and 2019 in the search for further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, in particular in the course of future negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament on the international legally binding instrument in this regard,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General,⁵

1. *Proclaims* it a historic responsibility of all States to ensure that the exploration of outer space is carried out exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind;

2. *Declares* that the exclusion of outer space from the sphere of the arms race and the preservation of outer space for peaceful purposes should become a mandatory norm of State policy and a generally recognized international obligation;

3. *Calls upon* all States, and above all those with major space capabilities, to this end:

² See [CD/1839](#).

³ See [CD/1985](#).

⁴ Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Burundi, Cambodia, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Togo, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Viet Nam.

⁵ [A/77/80](#).

(a) To take urgent measures to prevent for all time the placement of weapons in outer space and the threat or use of force in outer space, from space against Earth and from Earth against objects in outer space;

(b) To seek through negotiations the early elaboration of appropriate reliably verifiable legally binding multilateral agreements;

4. *Expresses its deep regret* over the years of stalemate in the work of the Conference on Disarmament, and looks forward to the Conference again fulfilling its mandate as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum;

5. *Urges* the Conference on Disarmament to agree on and implement at its earliest opportunity a balanced and comprehensive programme of work that includes the immediate commencement of negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force in outer space, from space against Earth and from Earth against objects in outer space;

6. *Acknowledges* that the guaranteed prevention of an arms race in outer space will provide an opportunity for the peaceful exploration of outer space and its use in solving acute major problems relating to economic, social and cultural development facing mankind today, as well as in consolidating the efforts of States of the world in this domain;

7. *Welcomes* the establishment in 2023 of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider and make recommendations on substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including, *inter alia*, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space;

8. *Decides*, with a view to ensuring continuity and consistency in the consideration of issues pertaining to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, upon the termination of the activities of the above-mentioned Group of Governmental Experts, to establish for the period 2024–2028 an open-ended working group to continue building on the work of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider and to make recommendations on substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including, *inter alia*, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, as well as to consider various aspects of the prevention of an arms race in outer space in the context of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space;

9. *Decides also* that the newly established open-ended working group will operate by consensus, without prejudice to national positions in future negotiations, and will hold in Geneva its organizational two-day session in 2024, as well as eight sessions, comprising two sessions annually of 10 and 5 days each in 2025, 2026, 2027 and 2028;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide all necessary assistance to the open-ended working group and its Chair and to transmit its report to the General Assembly at its eighty-third session, the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission;

11. *Decides* that, if the Conference on Disarmament agrees upon and implements a balanced and comprehensive programme of work that includes the negotiation of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including, *inter alia*, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, the newly established open-ended working group will

conclude its work and submit the results thereof to the Secretary-General for onward transmission to the Conference on Disarmament;

12. *Also decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-ninth session, under the item entitled “Prevention of an arms race in outer space”, the sub-item entitled “Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space”.

50th (resumed) plenary meeting
22 December 2023
