

**First Committee of the 77<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly**

**Cluster 3 (Outer Space – PAROS)**

**Statement delivered by H.E BAE Jongin, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations**

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Chair,

As a space-faring nation, the Republic of Korea is firmly committed to ensuring a secure, safe, and sustainable space environment. While we all share the goal of maintaining peace in outer space, we also need to face the reality that there are divergent views on how to reach the common goal and what should be the urgent priorities in those collective efforts.

A lingering sense of distrust and a lack of communication between states had contributed to a deepening sense of divide. Moreover, given the dual-use characteristics and cross-cutting nature of space technology, it is not easy for states to be clear about the intentions of the space activities, actions and systems of others. And this can lead to the escalation of tensions and even to an arms race.

In this regard, the UNGA resolution which was tabled by the UK and adopted by an overwhelming majority in 2020 and 2021, allows us to deliberate on a holistic and comprehensive approach necessary to address various dimensions of threats. It offers a viable venue for a more forward-looking and action-oriented platform to address this matter of ever-increasing urgency.

The Republic of Korea therefore fully supports this resolution and has been actively taking part in the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) process over the past year. In

contribution to these ongoing international efforts, the Republic of Korea organized a virtual conference in May with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and Secure World Foundation (SWF) to foster dialogue with ASEAN Member States towards reaching a common understanding on threats pertaining to the space domain. The Republic of Korea also supported the development of an infographic on anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons to raise the international community's awareness of ASAT weapons and their impact on space sustainability published in June by the SWF.

We look forward to continuing the process next year to find common ground and draw recommendations on responsible behaviours. While we continue on the journey towards the conclusion of a legally binding and effectively verifiable space security treaty, we recognize that leaving the vacuum of norms, principles and regulations unattended could be irreversibly detrimental.

In this regard, the Republic of Korea is proud to be one of the first countries committing not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing. We also welcome and support the draft resolution tabled by the U.S. on this very subject. Indeed, such testing is one of the most significant threats as they create long-lived debris that can not only endanger human lives and space assets but also prevent future use of space orbits by others. We believe that the relay of commitments and supporting the relevant resolution would be the first step to drawing up norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours.

Chair,

We should never forget the primary role of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. We welcome that the CD has held debates within the subsidiary body established this year and that this subsidiary body was able to reach consensus on its report notwithstanding a serious short fall on the annual report of the CD itself.

The Republic of Korea also welcomes the efforts pursued through the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) as well as the report issued by the GGE on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities. We believe these efforts have contributed in valuable ways to the fostering of a deeper shared understanding spanning a range of views and approaches.

Mr. Chair,

Taking this opportunity, the Republic of Korea would like to highlight the essential role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) in promoting international cooperation in the peaceful use of outer space.

Taking into consideration of the cross-cutting issues on outer space, my delegation welcomes the joint panel discussion of the First and Fourth Committees on Outer Space as a valuable opportunity to explore ways to address the potential challenges facing space security and sustainability. We look forward to tomorrow's session.

In closing, the Republic of Korea wishes to reaffirm its strong commitment to international efforts to ensure that space activities do indeed ultimately prove to promote global peace, safety and security. And indeed that they can be tapped and channeled in such a way as to further improve the lives of people all around the world.

Thank you, Chair. /END/