



General Assembly

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Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Note verbale dated 4 May 2017 from the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations (Vienna) addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations (Vienna) has the honour to provide the following notification with respect to the re-entry of the space laboratory Tiangong-1.

Tiangong-1 was launched into outer space on 29 September 2011. It conducted six successive rendezvous and docking activities with the Shenzhou-8, Shenzhou-9 and Shenzhou-10 spacecraft, completed all its designated mission objectives and made important contributions to the development of manned spaceflight in China. Having completely fulfilled its historic mission, Tiangong-1 reached the end of its operation on 16 March 2016. Its orbit continues to be under constant and close surveillance by China.

To date, Tiangong-1 has maintained its structural integrity and its current average orbital altitude is 349 kilometres, which is decaying at a daily rate of approximately 160 metres. Its re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere is expected to occur between October 2017 and April 2018. According to calculations and analyses, most of the structural components of Tiangong-1 will burn up and be destroyed during the course of the re-entry. The probability of harm to aviation and on the ground as a result of Tiangong-1's re-entry is very low.

China attaches great importance to the re-entry of Tiangong-1 and will take the measures set out below to fulfil its responsibilities in terms of monitoring and making information publicly available.

China will make arrangements to further enhance its tracking and monitoring of Tiangong-1's orbit and, in the light of orbital developments, publish timely forecasts of its re-entry. China will also utilize information from international coordinated observations made under the framework of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee in order to acquire more information about the orbital decay of Tiangong-1.

China will also improve its information-reporting mechanisms and will make information on Tiangong-1's orbital status and other related information available in real time through the website of the China Manned Space Agency (www.cmse.gov.cn) in both Chinese and English. Timely information about important milestones and events during the decay and re-entry phases will be released through the news media.



China will announce the final re-entry time and the area likely to be affected well in advance and will issue the relevant information and early warnings in a timely manner. China will also bring such information to the attention of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat through diplomatic channels.
