

Japan's view on the way forward to advancing the discussion on possible normative mechanisms on space debris mitigation and remediation measures under the framework of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Non-paper submitted by the Delegation of Japan

1. Background

- The increasing amount of space debris poses a serious threat to the safety, security, sustainability, and stability of outer space activities.
- It is imperative to acknowledge that the actual increase of space debris continues to outpace previous predictions and the world stands at a critical point.
- We, therefore, need to consider our next steps proactively. Otherwise, we will neither be able to enjoy the benefits of space systems, nor ordinary daily life on Earth in a sustainable way.
- Thus, addressing space debris requires an urgent and collective endeavour.

2. Possible normative mechanism for addressing the space debris issue

2.1 Respect and compliance with existing international norms and guidelines

- The first step in effectively addressing our space debris challenges is to respect and comply with existing international norms and guidelines.
- All States are encouraged to properly implement the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines and the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

2.2 Adoption of appropriate national policies and regulatory frameworks

- To ensure compliance with international norms and guidelines aimed at limiting a new generation of space debris, national policies and regulatory frameworks governing space activities play a key role.
- With regard to mitigation, many countries are already strengthening implementation of the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, and these efforts, including sharing best practices and actionable tools for safe and sustainable spacecraft operations, should be encouraged.

* [A/AC.105/L.337](#).



3. Areas that need international cooperation in considering possible normative mechanisms

- On remediation, however, we face particular difficulties. Business and economic incentives in this dimension are low, and regulatory uncertainty is large.
- Thus, we must intensify our efforts to address the lack of sufficient internationally common rules and mechanisms.

4. Call for acceleration of the discussions under the framework of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

- The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, with the reliable support of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, should not be outpaced by the speed of development of technologies and the accumulation both of residual and emerging challenges. A typical example of these challenges is remediation of space debris.
- It is high time for the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Subcommittees, as the legitimate body for standard setting, to come up with concrete ideas on the way forward.
- All states need to consider a practical way forward to accelerate discussions on the issues related to mitigation and remediation, including active debris removal (ADR), under the framework of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

5. Moving Forward

- A number of policy and legal issues arise when considering active debris removal and on-orbit servicing missions involving multiple States. It has been helpful to have opportunities, at the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities (LTS2.0 WG), to discuss other States' experiences and approaches licensing on-orbit servicing activities, including active debris removal, in a safe and transparent manner.
- Japan plans to continue working through the challenges to the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, including categorization of the challenges under the existing framework of LTS2.0 WG.
