



68th session of the Committee of Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

25 June – 2 July 2025

Statement by Australia

Agenda Item: 5 – Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes

Thank you, Chair, distinguished delegates.

Maintaining a peaceful and secure outer space environment is essential, as States increasingly depend on space-based services for communication, navigation, security, and emergency response. These technologies also provide critical data for addressing global challenges such as climate change, extreme weather, and disaster management.

Space is an economic enabler, supporting the prosperity of States. All States have an interest in taking effective and appropriate measures to maintain outer space for peaceful purposes.

This means addressing the security and stability of the outer space environment so that vital everyday space-based services can continue and that outer space remains accessible to all.

Chair,

As we come together to address global challenges, we must respect international law and the multilateral system. Our cooperation within the United Nations system is more important than ever.

The Outer Space Treaty is the cornerstone of the international framework governing the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. Australia would like to take this opportunity to call on all States who have not yet done so to ratify the Outer Space Treaty, and to those who have ratified, to comply fully with their treaty obligations.

Chair,

We recognize the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space as the key United Nations platform for addressing matters related to the peaceful uses of outer space.

The Committee's efforts are part of a broader international framework, with UN disarmament bodies—particularly the General Assembly's First Committee—playing a key role in advancing initiatives that encourage all States to act responsibly, reduce tensions and miscalculations to preserve the space environment.

All UN member States share the responsibility of contributing to the stability and security of the outer space environment.

This requires an approach that reflects the current realities of the space domain and the diverse threats that have emerged. It also involves recognising the inherent challenges in defining and verifying the purpose of many capabilities, due to the rapidly evolving dual-use and dual-purpose nature of many space technologies.

For these reasons, Australia – alongside an increasing number of States – supports a space security framework centred on the development of norms, rules, and principles that promote responsible behaviours in outer space. We see responsible behaviours as essential to preserve peace in the outer space environment, and ensure it is accessible to everyone.

An important subset of responsible behaviours is transparency and confidence building measures (TCBMs). TCBMs are specific measures that improve transparency around activities in space, such as on-orbit operations and manoeuvres, and help to build trust and confidence in the international community.

For example, as on-orbit servicing becomes a reality, satellite operators, and states of registration will need to communicate intention to approach specific satellites for the purpose of refuelling or other maintenance activities. The behaviour of open and transparent communication will prevent strategic miscalculations in space and help ensure that intentions are understood. This will ultimately help to make outer space safer and more peaceful.

Chair,

Australia is on record in supporting the exploration of non-binding behavioural measures to advancing space security.

Historical experience shows that the most widely supported space governance instruments have emerged through the gradual development of shared principles and norms. A prime example is the Outer Space Treaty, which was grounded in two foundational UN resolutions—one prohibiting the placement of weapons of mass destruction in outer space, and another establishing the Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space.

This process highlights the importance of first establishing a robust base of non-binding measures. This creates the conditions necessary for developing a comprehensive legal and normative framework capable of addressing both current and emerging challenges in outer space.

We can draw inspiration from the Guidelines for the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, as an example of non-binding measures that can help us to create positive patterns of behaviour in space.

Australia welcomes continued dialogue on this issue and looks forward to active participation in the upcoming meetings of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space in all its Aspects.

Australia would like to note with concern the Russian proposal for a draft resolution entitled “Space science and technology for promoting peace”. This proposal is primarily in relation to space security and is, therefore, not within the mandate of COPUOS to consider.

Thank you.