

General exchange of information on non-legally binding United Nations instruments on outer space.**Mr Chair and distinguished Delegates,**

India recognizes the UN-COPUOS Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines and the UN adopted 21 guidelines on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities as vital non-legally binding instruments for ensuring safe and sustainable utilization of outer space and appreciates their immense contributions as guiding principles for shaping national-level policies and directives for responsible, safe, and sustainable conduct of space activities.

Mr. Chair,

India has already prioritized the implementation of these guidelines and actively pursues improving compliance with these guidelines through ongoing, proactive efforts and formulation of guidelines that promote space sustainability among Indian space actors. In 2024, the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre, IN-SPACe, brought out Norms, Guidelines and Procedures for the implementation of Indian Space Policy-2023 in respect of authorization of Space Activities that are in line with the aforementioned guidelines. The intent for Debris Free Space Mission or DFSM, which was unveiled in 2024, reaffirms India's long-standing commitment to ensuring sustainable and peaceful use of outer space. DFSM also aligns with the ongoing global efforts for a safe, secure, and sustainable space and to preserve the common heritage of humankind for future generations.

Mr. Chair,

With the steadily increasing orbital congestion, there is need for more stringent adherence to practices related to space debris mitigation and preserving long-term sustainability. The rapidly evolving space landscape due to skyrocketing space traffic, increasing number of atmospheric re-entries, and the persistent proliferation of large satellite constellations and small satellites poses challenges to safe, secure, and sustainable operations in outer space. Addressing these challenges entails a comprehensive and coordinated strategy with the inclusive participation of all relevant stakeholders from private industries, academic institutions, and state-owned space organizations.

Given the growing number of lunar missions in the near future, India believes that it is worthwhile to deliberate on the potential for extending some of these non-binding instruments on mitigation of space debris and LTS to lunar and cislunar regions, these instruments can be evolved from the prevalent best practices with a wider participation of member States to incorporate the views of those who aspire to explore the Moon and beyond.

Mr. Chair,

India looks forward to continued deliberations on these non-legally binding instruments and their further extensions to tackle the emerging challenges of preserving the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

Thank You, Mr. Chair and Distinguished Delegates.