



**68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
First Committee**

**Statement by
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**Introduction by the delegation of Sri Lanka of draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.41 on the
"Prevention of an arms race in outer space"**

25th October 2013

Mr. Chairman,

We have experienced races for arms in land, the sea and the air. Outer space must not be another arena for an arms race. The deployment of weapons in outer space could seriously threaten the security of outer space assets which benefit all humanity and has the potential to harm the Earth's biosphere and give rise to more space debris.

Sri Lanka's long standing position is that the outer space is part of the world heritage and must be explored, and utilized for peaceful purposes and for the benefit and interest of all mankind in the spirit of cooperation. We believe it is much easier to prevent an arms race from taking place rather than controlling it or rolling it back once it has begun. We are ready to work with all parties to contribute to maintaining lasting peace and security in outer space.

For many years, Sri Lanka and Egypt have alternately presented the draft resolution on the '**Prevention of an arms race in outer space**' which calls for the negotiation of a legally-binding international instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space at the Conference on Disarmament (CD). This year's draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.41, which my delegation is introducing, recognizes the long-held general understanding regarding this issue, and therefore, closely follows last year's resolution, with only technical updates.

The text of this year's draft resolution, like in previous years, emphasizes the complementary nature of bilateral and multilateral efforts and stresses the importance of greater transparency in sharing information on all bilateral efforts in this field. The draft resolution also recognizes that the CD has the primary role in addressing this issue.

We believe that the "**draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, and of the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects**" tabled in the CD by China and the Russian Federation is the most viable basis to talks to begin on a legally binding instrument. We hope the CD will commence substantive discussions on the draft treaty as soon as possible.

Sri Lanka attaches importance to transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs). In this regard, we welcome the constructive discussions and the report to the GA of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE). TCBMs can promote mutual understanding and reduce misperceptions among States. Such measures are complementary to a legally-binding international instrument. Yet, they are not legally binding on States and their success depends on the political commitment of States. Therefore we reiterate the need for a legally binding treaty that would take into account all the complexities and different perspectives of space security.

We encourage that all members of the Committee to support the draft resolution as a manifestation of the general desire of humankind to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Thank You.