



Statement by Ambassador Vinicio Mati
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva, 15th June 2017

Mr. Facilitator,

Let me first of all congratulate you on your appointment as friend of the Chair for the discussion on PAROS.

I would also like to thank you for the way in which you are structuring the discussion.

Many thanks also to UNIDIR representative, Mr. Pellegrino, for yesterday's presentation, as well as to the UK DPR, Mr. Pollard, for the very useful summary of the discussions held in 2015 CD session.

On the topic that we are addressing today Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union.

Mr. Facilitator,

Italy remains fully committed to preventing an arms race in outer space and to preventing outer space from becoming an area of conflict as essential conditions to strengthen strategic stability. Strategic stability will also allow all States to benefit from peaceful uses of outer space and the opportunities for development these can provide.

In this regard, we deeply value the substantive discussions conducted also in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. We believe that they were extremely useful and they contributed to deepen our understanding of this topic. We underline the value of having further discussions within this Working Group.

Mr. Facilitator,

The growth in amount of human-space activity and the sharply increasing number of objects in space are among the major reasons why a comprehensive and effective international regulatory environment should be elaborated and put into force. States must commit to enhancing the wellbeing of humankind by working together for the long-term sustainability, safety and security of the space environment.

For this reason we have been among the main supporters of the EU draft International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities, as a first, non-legally binding step, which would be fully complementary to other initiatives, including a comprehensive, effective, and verifiable legally binding instrument.

Despite the slowdown in the ICoC negotiations, we continue to believe that a set of globally shared principles of responsible behaviour in outer space would be the most appropriate response to the common sense of urgency expressed by the International Community.

Such principles, which could lead to an international voluntary Code of Conduct, should serve long-term goals across the full range of space activities.

These should include non-interference in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space; prevention of the creation of debris; increasing international cooperation in space; preservation of the integrity of the space environment for all; equitable access to outer space; increasing transparency in the conduct of space exploration and exploitation activities.

We are also convinced that a crucial step towards achieving greater safety, security, and sustainability in outer space activities is represented by the effective implementation of Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures, including those identified by the Group of Governmental Experts in 2013, endorsed by the UN General Assembly.

TCBMs, such as the exchange of information relating to States' space policies and activities, risk reduction notifications and expert visits to national space facilities, reduce the risk of misunderstanding and miscommunication. They help build mutual confidence and are complementary to the existing legal international framework.

Italy fully supports these goals, and stands ready to give its contribution towards their achievement.

Thank you, Mr. Facilitator