



ITALY



**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Vinicio Mati,
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament
to the First Committee of the 70th UN General Assembly
Statement on Outer Space
Joint meeting of the I and IV UNGA Committees, 22 October 2015**

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Thank you Ambassador Karel van Oosterom and Ambassador Brian Bowler for coordinating today's discussion. We welcome this joint meeting of the I and IV Committees; we believe it is a good opportunity to continue exchanging views on Outer Space issues, which are prominent on our foreign policy agenda.

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement of the distinguished representative of the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Since the launch of our first artificial satellite in 1964, Italy has been at the forefront of outer space activities. We have continued to develop our space capabilities in several areas, including in the development of the International Space Station, always promoting the use of space technology as a driving force for economic growth and innovation to the benefit of all.

We are very aware of our societies' increasing reliance on the use of outer space. For this, we underscore the need to guarantee the peaceful use of outer space and to address potential escalation dynamics and security risks that these might entail. We feel a sense of urgency in this respect.

Italy is party to the core United Nations treaties on outer space, to more than sixty bilateral agreements with both space-faring and developing countries, and actively participates in different regional and international organizations and interagency committees whose work is relevant to the development and peaceful use of outer space.

We have also actively participated in the work of the GGE on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures (TCBMs) in Outer Space Activities, and fully support its 2013 Report. We continue to look forward to its concrete implementation and, in this respect, our attention has primarily focused on the EU-led proposal for an International Code of Conduct (ICoC).

We trust that well-designed voluntary measures for outer space activities, such as those included in the draft Code of Conduct, can usefully complement existing international legal frameworks without undermining standing obligations. Such measures are not intended to hamper the lawful use of outer space; on the contrary, they would benefit and preserve such a use, particularly in the interest of emerging space actors.

Italy remains convinced that the Code of Conduct would be a useful confidence-building measure in line with the recommendations of the GGE, as endorsed by the General Assembly. Faced with the current absence of an effective verification system for States' outer space activities, we firmly believe that TCBMs today provide a first step to ensuring the communication necessary to prevent misunderstandings and avoid unnecessary tensions.

Its implementation can provide the momentum for the creation of reinforced legal frameworks in the longer term, paving the way for more stringent and legally-binding rules.

Italy believes that the Code should be a pragmatic instrument, based on a preventive approach, to foster international cooperation in outer space in order to enhance its safety, security and sustainability, to the benefit of both spacefaring and non-spacefaring countries. It should be comprehensive in its scope, taking into account that peaceful activities in outer space, by their very nature, could serve both civilian and military purposes.

For these reasons, we highly value the useful elements derived from the debate among the 109 States that attended the multilateral meeting in New York last July.

This confirms the continued importance of and interest in the subject of a space code of conduct. We are confident that the outcome of the New York meeting will foster further positive developments.

We welcome and will continue to be engaged in all efforts to produce arms control or other specific measures aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space, particularly in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

Thank you.