**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN**

**Geneva**

**Statement by Pakistan**

**Fourth Session of the Open-ended Working Group on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space in All Its Aspects**

*Agenda Item 6(b)(ii)(7): Elements on basic obligations related to the national space policies, doctrines and strategies and other measures that could reduce the risk of escalation, conflict and an arms race in outer space*

**Geneva, 24 November 2026**

**Mr. Chair,**

Before turning to today's topic, allow me to share a moment of national pride. Tomorrow morning, Pakistani astronaut **Muhammad Zeeshan Ali** is scheduled to lift off aboard Shenzhou-24 from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center. He will become the **first Pakistani in orbit** and the **first international astronaut to visit China's Tiangong space station**, where he will conduct experiments designed by Pakistani scientists. We thank the People's Republic of China for this partnership.

This mission is a reminder of what outer space can be: a domain of science, cooperation and shared benefit, open to developing countries as much as to established space powers. That is precisely what is at stake in this room.

**Mr. Chair,**

Doctrines decide budgets, force structures and procurement. And they are read by others as statements of intent.

When a doctrine describes outer space as a war-fighting domain, or seeks superiority and dominance there, other States plan accordingly. Each plan then becomes the justification for the next. That is the action-reaction cycle we spoke about yesterday.

The trends are clear. Outer space has been declared an operational or war-fighting domain in a number of national and alliance doctrines. Dedicated military space forces have been established. Concepts of "space control" and "space superiority" have moved from doctrine into deployment, with the public acknowledgement of on-orbit weapons.

**Mr. Chair,**

Transparency is part of the answer. Our working paper calls on States to make their national space security policies public, consistent with the recommendations of the 2013 Group of Governmental Experts. We welcome those who do. But **transparency is a means, not an end.** Publishing a doctrine of dominance does not reduce risk; it confirms it. The content of doctrines matters as much as their publication.

This is why paragraph 23 of Pakistan's working paper A/AC.297/2026/WP.2 proposes that States Parties should:

(a) ensure that their national space policies, doctrines and strategies are **consistent with their obligations** under the prospective instrument, the Charter of the United Nations and the Outer Space Treaty, including the use of outer space for peaceful purposes;

(b) **refrain from characterizing outer space as a war-fighting domain**; and

(c) adopt measures to improve transparency and avoid misunderstanding, so as to **reduce the risk of escalation**, conflict and an arms race in outer space.

**Mr. Chair,**

Among the other measures that could reduce the risk of escalation, my delegation would highlight three.

**First, consultation.** Article IX of the Outer Space Treaty already provides for consultations where an activity may cause harmful interference. It has rarely been used. Elements that turn it into a practical, timely mechanism would give States a way to raise concerns before they become crises.

**Second, communication.** Designated points of contact and crisis communication channels, as called for in our working paper, are the minimum any State operating in outer space should have.

**Third, entanglement.** Many satellites serve both conventional and strategic functions, including early warning and the command and control of strategic forces. Interference with such systems, even in a conventional conflict, could be misread as preparation for something far more serious. The Working Group should consider how elements in this area can address that risk.

**Mr. Chair,**

Our National Space Policy, adopted in December 2023, is public, and it is built around the peaceful use of outer space for national development.

The elements I have outlined complement the measures we will discuss this afternoon under item 6(c)(ix). Together, they can help ensure that outer space remains what tomorrow's launch represents: a domain of cooperation, not confrontation.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.

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