



**Statement by Japan at the webinar series of
Facilitating Multilateral Dialogue on the Development of Norms, Rules
and Principles of Responsible Behaviour in Outer Space
May 21, 2021**

At the outset, I would like to express our appreciation to the UNODA and the UNOOSA for organizing this very timely webinar and to all the previous speakers for their insightful and informative remarks regarding responsible behaviour in outer space.

Given the increasing importance of and reliance on space by all nations and actors, the secure and sustainable use of space has become in the interest of all. Against this backdrop, we are now facing various challenges in terms of space security, starting from congestion of space to development and deployment of counterspace capabilities. As the users and uses of space greatly vary, inclusiveness is vital to foster common understanding regarding threats and approaches to deal with these threats to avoid risks of misunderstanding and miscalculation.

From this standpoint, the Japanese Government co-sponsored the UNGA Resolution 75/36, presented its national submission to the UNSG and organized a 1.5 track workshop in cooperation with the Australian Strategic Policy Institute in this April with the objective to promote dialogue in the Asia Pacific region. Japan values such exchange of views and looks forward to continuing discussion on this important agenda.

As a co-sponsor to the Resolution 75/36 and one of the leading spacefaring nations, Japan is strongly committed to maintaining outer space as a peaceful, safe, stable, secure and sustainable environment as well as to reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviors. Japan also supports the objective of preventing an arms race in outer space.

I would like to highlight four key points of Japanese national submission that Japan has submitted to the UNSG as encouraged by the UNGA resolution 75/36.

- Firstly, the dual-use nature of technologies and objects needs to be taken into account when addressing the security of outer space. This dual-use nature poses difficult challenges in identifying space threats through focusing solely on technological capabilities. From this point of view, focusing on observable behaviours would contribute to effective verification, even in the absence of explicit intention.
- Secondly, establishing a common understanding at the international level on patterns of behaviours that are regarded as either responsible or irresponsible would enhance security in outer space by discouraging irresponsible behaviours in light of their potential consequences while encouraging behaviours that enhance transparency and trust. Such efforts are not intended to modify the existing international law nor its applicability but can lead to guidance in this field.
- Thirdly, in studying existing and potential threats and security risks to space systems, we suggest to focus on the following three areas: (1) the creation of debris by deliberate destruction of space objects, (2) rendezvous and proximity operations and (3) harmful interference.
- Fourthly, when articulating norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours, we are of the view that the following three elements should be considered: (1) consequences for security and/or endangering peoples' lives, (2) communication and (3) civil needs and potential needs of developing countries for the peaceful uses of outer space.

In conclusion, Japan would like to reaffirm its commitment and support to further discussions on space security based on the UNGA Resolution 75/36, which gained wide support from the international community and would pave the way for an open and inclusive process.

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