

Conference on Disarmament

15 January 2020
English
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Letter dated 23 October 2019 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation addressed to the Secretary-General of the of the Conference on Disarmament, Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, transmitting the text of the Joint Statement of the CIS States Parties on Supporting Practical Steps to Prevent an Arms Race in Outer Space adopted by the CIS States Parties' Ministers of Foreign Affairs on October 10, 2019

Excellency, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Joint Statement of the CIS States Parties on Supporting Practical Steps to Prevent an Arms Race in Outer Space adopted by the CIS States Parties' Ministers of Foreign Affairs on October 10, 2019.

I would be grateful if this letter and the attached Joint Statement could be issued and circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed) Genady Gatilov



Annex

Joint statement by the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) on supporting practical steps to prevent an arms race in outer space

1. The States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) carry out activities in the exploration and use of outer space in full conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies and other rules and principles of international law in order to promote international cooperation and understanding and to maintain international peace and security. They stress the need for broad joint efforts by the international community to improve the relevant international legal system.
2. The CIS member States express serious concern about the real prospect of an arms race in outer space and of the transformation of outer space into a scene of military confrontation, which is undermining global stability. They note that a ban on the placement of weapons of any type in outer space could prevent the emergence of a serious threat to international peace and security.
3. The States once again emphasize the exceptional importance of immediately adopting practical measures to prevent an arms race in outer space, the most effective of which remains the negotiation by the international community of a legally binding multilateral document that would provide reliable guarantees for the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the placement of weapons there, on the basis of the Chinese-Russian 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. They reaffirm the key role played by the Conference on Disarmament – the single disarmament negotiating forum – in negotiating international agreements for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, in all its aspects.
4. The CIS member States welcome the work of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts established to consider and develop recommendations for the substantive elements of a legally binding international instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, specifically including the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, and express regret that one expert blocked the Group's adoption of the report by consensus. They call for the groundwork carried out by the Group to be used in further activities for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.
5. The CIS member States agree that transparency and confidence-building measures help to prevent the placement of weapons in outer space. They express regret that, at the seventy-third session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the resolution on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, which has traditionally been adopted by consensus, was put to a vote for the first time. They call for an immediate return to the practice of adopting it unanimously. Pending the conclusion of a legally binding agreement on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, the CIS member States will actively contribute to the international community's efforts to keep outer space free of weapons. The promotion and global acceptance of a multilateral initiative/political commitment on no first placement of weapons in outer space represent an important contribution to these efforts.
6. In recent years, as the sole transparency and confidence-building measure currently being implemented with a view to preventing an arms race in outer space, the initiative on no first placement of weapons in outer space has become a significant political factor in strengthening international peace, ensuring equal and indivisible security for all and increasing the predictability and sustainability of the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.