Addendum to section IV of document A/72/65
“Report of the Secretary-General
“Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities”

**Russian Federation**

The report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space Activities and the recommendations it contains set important goals and define high standards related to safety and security in outer space. The Russian Federation wholly supports this document and promotes the effective implementation of its provisions.

In response to a relevant request by the United Nations Secretary-General, the Russian Federation transmitted to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space its submission regarding the modalities of making practical use of these recommendations (A/AC.105/1080/Add.2).

Close attention is being given to this report in the Committee in the context of its work on the set of guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. Building on the constructive attitudes and measures proposed to be adopted by way of following the recommendations contained in the report, the Russian Federation has conceptualized and introduced a package of proposals on regulating safety of space operations. The Russian Federation notes with satisfaction that the proposals it has advanced on different aspects of safety of space operations have given rise to considerable interest with regard to in-depth analysis of many issues that need to be resolved.

The discussions in Vienna dealing with the most complex issues of safety and security, that have never before been addressed at an official level in practical terms and in such a functional way, facilitate the understanding of the immediate and more remote joint solutions in this area. As work on the guidelines (that has already made it possible for States to gain positive experience in communication)
proceeds, it increases the level of interest in ever more ambitious endeavours, including those related to informational support for ensuring safety of space operations. It has become evident that a whole system of attitudes is needed to regulate exchanges of information on space objects and events.

Operating under the aegis of the United Nations of an information platform to collect, compare, add precision to and aggregate near-Earth space situational information from different sources could decisively promote the development of potentials and competences of States in this field. The Russian Federation advocates providing full scope for the potential new Working group on space objects and events of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

The Russian Federation calls upon all States involved in negotiations in the Committee to unite their efforts so that the successful completion in 2018 of work on the guidelines would make it possible to pursue new avenues of cooperation and take further action on resolving closely-related issues of shaping a wide system of security in outer space.

Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities play a direct and positive role in the development, at national and international policy levels, of approaches to the exploration and use of outer space. Such measures serve as a model of a rational approach to solving challenging tasks. As it may be expected, a range of recommendations will successfully be transformed into a quite useful regulation of safety of space operations. Many other recommendations related to equally important themes, also hold promise for the future in terms of their evolution.

In 2016, with a view to implement recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts as applied to the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, the Russian Federation together with the People’s Republic of China and the United States of America came up with a proposal to include the following new item in the forum’s agenda: «In accordance with the recommendations contained in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space Activities
(A/68/189), preparation of recommendations to promote the practical implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities with the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space. The informal consultations on this issue held in 2017 demonstrated positive attitudes on the part of States to the initiative. The Russian Federation expects that the new item will be added to the Commission’s agenda in the shortest time.

The Russian Federation believes that the initiative, originally Russian and now increasingly becoming international, that calls upon States to politically commit themselves not to be the first to place weapons in outer space represents one of the most actionable and practicable measures closely correlated with transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities. Since the proposal was submitted by the Russian Federation in 2004, the number of States fully participating in its implementation has reached 17. With a view to making it truly global, the Russian Federation, starting from 2014 has been annually introducing for the General Assembly’s consideration a dedicated resolution exactly on the topic, that has been also supported by more than two thirds of the United Nations Member States and already cosponsored by 45 States.

The Russian Federation regards the widest possible implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities as an important prerequisite for elaborating and concluding a legally binding treaty on the prevention of placement of weapons in outer space. The Russia-China draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against outer space objects serves a good basis for achieving this goal. The Russian Federation calls upon States to play an active role in promoting this topic which is highly relevant considering the need to strengthen international security and sustain strategic stability.