



## CONCEPT NOTE

### **UN SECURITY COUNCIL ARRIA-FORMULA MEETING** “RISKS AND CHALLENGES EMANATING FROM UNCONTROLLED USE OF LOW EARTH ORBIT SATELLITES”

**Date:** 29 December 2025

**Time:** 10am – 1pm

**Venue:** Conference Room 6

**Participation:** All UN Member States, Permanent Observers, UN entities, civil society organizations and press are invited

The meeting will be interpreted in all official UN languages and webcast on UN WebTV.

#### **Background:**

The late 2010s saw a boom in large-scale commercial use of Low Earth Orbit satellite communication systems (LEO satellites). This was made possible due to a combination of factors, including reduced launch costs, design improvements and skyrocketing demand for broadband connectivity worldwide.

Since then, thousands of such spacecraft have been deployed, forming mega constellations in the Low Earth Orbit. Major LEO operators, such as SpaceX (Starlink), Amazon Leo (formerly Project Kuiper) and Eutelsat OneWeb, have dominated the market while claiming to offer cost efficiency, faster data transmission and better overall accessibility, especially in remote areas of various countries. LEO satellites are used in different spheres, *inter alia* providing Internet services for the education, agriculture, and science.

However, the emergence of this dual-use technology has brought numerous challenges for the sovereignty of States, space sustainability, international peace and security. LEO operators have been known to transmit signals that bypass national regulatory bodies and go beyond national jurisdictions. Illegally imported LEO terminals have been used to destabilize public order through dissemination of disinformation, manipulation of electoral processes and coordination of anti-government protests from abroad. This not only violates the fundamental principle of non-interference in domestic affairs of States, but also compromises their national security.

Despite their declared commercial and civilian nature, these satellites have played a significant role in armed conflicts, including proxy wars. Notably, they have been leveraged to gather intelligence, coordinate military operations, program precision strikes, guide UAVs and organize terrorist attacks. Threats to the use of outer space for peaceful purposes, such as space debris, cannot be discarded either.

The International Telecommunication Union has recognized the seriousness of this issue, which is now on the agenda of the World Radiocommunication Conference 2027. In addition, the Russian Federation convened a UNGA First Committee side event, “Low Orbit Satellite Internet Systems in the Context of International Peace and Security: Challenges and Threats”, which took place on 13 October 2025.

Given the growing number of countries that have faced some form of interference through LEO satellites, as well as the multifaceted nature of threats posed by these systems, it is essential to hold a free and open discussion within the United Nations Security Council on this topic. This Arria-formula meeting will allow to raise awareness among its members and other participating delegations as well as to receive valuable perspective from non-state actors.

## **Objectives:**

This Arria-formula meeting will focus on the risks to international peace and security associated with uncontrolled use of LEO satellites. Participants will be invited to exchange views on the appropriate ways to collectively deal with these emerging challenges.

## **Guiding questions for discussion:**

- How does the global nature of LEO operations correlate with national jurisdiction?
- How to avoid situation where LEO operators do not follow the national legislations?
- How can States protect themselves from illegal interference facilitated by LEO systems?
- What can be done to ensure legal responsibility and accountability of LEO operators, whether by national means or through international legally binding agreements?
- Do States bear responsibility for participation of LEO operators working within their jurisdiction in proxy wars?

## **Briefers:**

- **Mr. Alexey Borodin**, Director-General of the Regional Commonwealth in the Field of Communications;
- **Mr. Victor Strelets**, Chairman of Study Group 4, Radio Communications Sector, International Telecommunications Union, Expert of the National Research Centre for Telecommunication, Moscow;
- *TBA.*

## **Discussion:**

Statements by the members of the Security Council and other Member States as time permits, Q&A. Interventions are suggested to be limited to 3 minutes.