

**Question for written answer E-001781/2019  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

**Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski (PPE)**

Subject: Destruction of satellites and the problem of space debris

At the end of March this year, India successfully tested a ballistic anti-satellite missile that destroyed an inactive Indian satellite. The Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, called this event an unprecedented achievement in a television address. He asserted that India had become – alongside the USA, China and Russia – a major space power. The downed satellite had been orbiting about 300 kilometres above the surface of the Earth, thus at a rather low altitude, but its destruction led to an increase in the amount of space debris around our planet by 6.5 thousand fragments. Considering the speed at which they move and their composition, even a fragment of five centimetres in length may pose a threat to other satellites.

The problem of space debris has been raised in the world's space forums for a long time. Many scientists are developing technologies to pull satellites out of orbit in a way that does not generate further debris. Unfortunately, we are just at the beginning of this road.

Could the Commission therefore say what steps it is implementing, or plans to implement, in order to counteract, as a responsible actor in space, the type of tests that have been carried out by India? Is there an international forum in which the Commission participates and which aims to tackle this problem?