

WORLD SPACE WEEK ASSOCIATION
Agenda Item no. 3
Presented by: Maruška Strah, Executive Director



Thank you, Madam Chair.

Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

We want to thank the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs for their guidance and support in organization of this meeting. Being mindful of the situation and the hardships that many countries are facing, we are grateful that we can gather with all of you and contribute to the discussions.

It is my great honor to speak to you on behalf of the World Space Week Association. Ever since the UN General Assembly declared the launch of an annual celebration of space during UNISPACE III in 1999, we celebrate World Space Week every year from 4th to 10th of October. The support of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and Member States has been crucial for the success of both, the World Space Week Association and the organizers of World Space Week events.

2020 was both, an exciting and challenging year, for the World Space Week Association. Being mindful of the safety recommendations by the national health authorities, WSWA pivoted towards

a strong emphasis on virtual events and interaction. Even in these challenging times, we are delighted that World Space Week was able to exceed our expectations with 6,583 virtual events.

Our 2020 Activities

For 2020, the World Space Week theme was “Satellites Improve Life”, celebrating the legacy and the future of satellites. Ever since the launching of the first man made satellite, humanity is more and more dependent on the use of satellites. In 2020, satellite technology was of special significance, given the role telemedicine is playing in supporting global health initiatives in the fight against the ongoing pandemic. The World Space Week Association encouraged participants to learn about, and celebrate, the benefits satellites bring to humanity, and the pivotal role that Earth Observation and remote sensing play in socio-economic development - especially for developing countries. Our work was strongly supported by SES and their CEO, Steve Collar, who served as Honorary Chair of World Space Week 2020.

We registered 6,583 space events in 91 countries, organized by over 2,900 organizers. I note with great pleasure that the annual number of events during World Space Week has risen from under 1000 in 2012 to over 8,000 in 2019. We acknowledge that the circumstance of the 2020 global pandemic caused a slight decline in the number of events due to strict lockdown restrictions and inability to organize events. We are, however, confident that we will see even more events

in the year to come, and we are expecting a combination of virtual and in-person events happening all over the world.

We encourage Member States to engage in World Space Week activities. We noted that many Member States celebrate their own space weeks, and we are delighted to see that so much is happening all around the world. We would be pleased, if you reach out to us about collaborating and partnering with us, and participating in the global, international World Space Week, which remains the largest celebration of space in the world. We are confident that our enormous outreach capabilities will positively impact and contribute to your missions as well. Last year we noted over 235 million impressions on social media over the week of World Space Week and we are convinced that together, we can further expand and inspire the next generation of space professionals and enthusiasts.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank the country with the highest number of events in 2020 - the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom's Ministry of Education's high level of support of World Space Week was crucial for the accomplishment of the grand total of 1982 events held in 2020.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize the other countries with the highest-ranking numbers of events – Pakistan, Ireland, Iran, and Brazil. I wish to express gratitude for the national

support you are dedicating to World Space Week and for the support you are showing participants of this celebration of space.

The 2021 World Space Week Theme: Women in Space

So where to next? 2020 was a difficult year for everyone, but we are confident that the year to come will be more positive.

With our 2021 theme, we do not only wish to bring more awareness to the issue of gender diversity in the space sector, albeit it is of great importance. Our aim is to identify the hurdles and obstacles that women are facing when entering space related careers and contribute to discussions on how we can overcome these challenges. According to reports, only 20 to 22 percent of the entire space industry workforce consists of females. We are mindful of women from different backgrounds and from different regions facing different issues, and we are aiming to shed light on this difference.

I am beyond excited to report that our Honorary Chair for 2021 is Ms. Lisa Callahan, Vice President of Lockheed Martin Corporation. It is an honor to have her work with us in reaching our goals and we are incredibly grateful for all the support we are receiving from Ms. Callahan and Lockheed Martin.

In 2021, the Association launched new special programs. Amongst these is a webinar series, dedicated to showcasing role models and raising the profiles of women. We are convinced that more female role models can positively impact the diversity of the space workforce. I am pleased to report that our first webinar entitled “The Promise of the Future of Space”, moderated by Ms. Callahan and with panelists from diverse backgrounds, was a great success with over 450 registered attendees. The recording is available on our communications channels and I kindly invite you to listen to the interesting discussion:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yV0DZiFOSAQ&t=89s>

I would also like to acknowledge all the work that the United Office for Outer Space Affairs is doing in its Space4Women mentor network, which I am personally proud to be a part of. The World Space Week Association wants to use our platforms to empower the next generation and we strongly support mentorship programs as a path towards achieving it.

The World Space Week Association Annual Report 2020

I would like to invite you to visit our website and take a closer look at our newly published Annual Report, describing all our activities of 2020. The Annual Report will give those interested a better understanding of our work and will hopefully encourage closer collaboration among us.

Link to the Annual Report: <https://www.worldspaceweek.org/organization/annual-reports/>

I am proud to say that the World Space Week Association strives to continue contributing to bringing space and space-related activities and technologies closer to people, regardless of their age, nationality and gender, and provides an open opportunity to participate in the largest celebration of space in the world.

In the name of the World Space Week Association, I encourage all delegations to use World Space Week as a platform to inspire youth in STEM and build their workforce of tomorrow. There is no doubt that governments, space agencies and educational institutions can benefit from engaging with World Space Week. We would like to enter dialogues with you individually and work out ways on how to collaborate closer and bring more attention to your programs and activities.

I would like to invite all Member States to take on an active role in supporting World Space Week, so that together we can continue to showcase the incredible achievements of the space community every year, 4 to 10 of October.

I thank you, Madame Chair, and distinguished delegates, for your attention. I am looking forward to a great year, and I am hoping that you will celebrate World Space Week 2021 with us, under the theme Women in Space.