

SPACE DIPLOMACY: USEFUL INITIATIVES FOR TAKING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION BEYOND THE SKIES

UNISPACE+50 - High Level Forum: Space as a Driver for Socio-Economic Sustainable Development

20 – 24 NOVEMBER 2016

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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SPACE DIPLOMACY

a term that today,
envisages a new
connotation given by the
space community:

- *brings us the idea of formulating and implementing practical initiatives so that interests of States are convergent in space

*it is the art of negotiating to coexist peacefully in outer space for the future of humankind

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ROLE TO PLAY: CONSIDERATIONS

- For decades, space diplomacy has been the instrument to establish important provisions when it comes to reducing threatening developments in space (e.g. harmful interference that hampers and prevents operations). To keep it that way, as space community, our role should be, more than ever, active and propositive;
- Global challenges and technology make us step up the pace of our initiatives aimed at using outer space in a sustainable manner;
- Space diplomatic engagements should not be seen as a means to prevent freedom of national actions or programs, as long as they are geared towards peaceful purposes and comply with space law;

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- We should not forget that outer space is a “world common ground” and, as such, States are called to work together for common purposes;
- New strategies should be implemented with the arrival of new players to the space arena. States are and will be responsible for coordinating this challenging relationship between the increasing stakeholders. I would mention, by way of example, the years of the space race, where, although there were only two players, it took several decades to reach an understanding;
- Decisions should be taken to ensure safety and security in outer space, coping with the increase and management of space traffic;
- The “smart influence” of pioneers should positively impact developing countries;

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- Mechanisms as multilateral or international treaties might be seen by some States as time-consuming procedures since usually they are linked with national interests. In the meantime, non-binding guidelines should be designed by policy shapers in order to reach and encourage policy makers with the view of making space activities accessible and transparent;



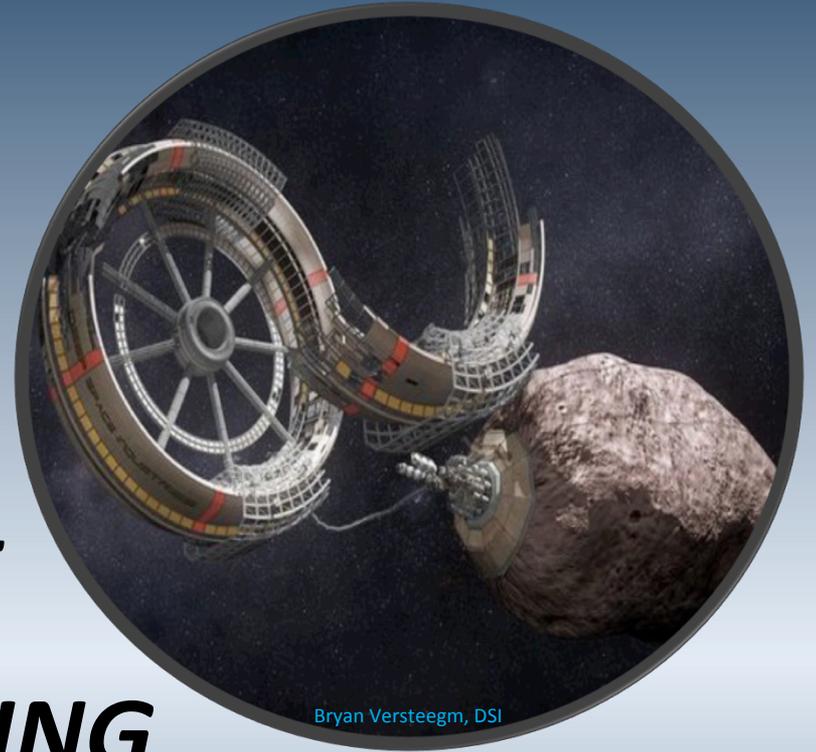
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- Space community should go beyond and address global society, rising awareness of the importance of outer space to educate, solve and motivate;
- COPUOS is by far, the international forum with the mandate to bring States together to minimize the inability or unwilling to implement key recommendations for strengthening space activities and make them priority in the national political agendas.
- COPUOS was created in an uncertain political environment precisely for the purpose of generating and promoting international collaboration in the peaceful use of outer space. Today, it is the forum that "gives life" to international space law, which sets the tone for States to design their space policies and, at the same time, expose needs and propose initiatives for ensuring space cooperation.

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- COPUOS must be attentive to the changes that humanity is facing, in order to make outer space an enabler of solutions to these challenges. The United Nations Agenda 2030 proposes objectives that may be attainable if States show political commitment to do so.
- COPUOS has already undertaken a series of actions to contribute to the sustainable development objectives, through space technology as a means for infrastructure development, monitoring of oceans and seas and, as a source of work and inspiration of new activities, among others.

SPACE MINING



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SPACE MINING: CONSIDERATIONS

- About 9,000 asteroids considered close to Earth may contain highly-valued minerals and resources (such as water, gold, nickel, iron, silicon and platinum), also named as the fuel of the future space life;



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SPACE MINING: CONSIDERATIONS

- Diverse opinions and positions have raised as this new space activity is about to be developed;
- A wide range of legal considerations must be taken into account for framing agreements oriented to the use of space as a global good; political will is crucial here;
- To pursue space cooperation with space faring nations, domestic legislations should not prevent developing countries from sharing the benefit of participation;
- Private growing space capabilities must go hand-in-hand with a responsible behavior in space, without stopping scientific and technological progress.

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COOPERATING FOR MEXICO AND LATIN AMERICA

- Over the last decades, Latin American countries have managed to build regional cooperation in the economic and commercial fields;
- Identification of social needs, technological breaches and climate phenomena, to name a few, have moved political dialogue forward to take cooperation to the next level; however, there is still a way to go;
- In the space sector, Latin America is urged to keep working together in forums as the CEA (Americas Space Conference) and swiftly lead to concrete actions to be taken on the ground but, most importantly, follow them up;
- To contribute to the above, Mexico has already signed a cooperation agreement with UNOOSA to host a regional support office for the programme UN-SPIDER.

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CONCLUSIONS

- Diplomacy is not the only mechanism to negotiate, but is one of the most rewarding ones; space diplomacy gives us that "power" to guarantee, for the next 50 years and beyond, an accessible and sustainable outer space.
- Due to my participation in COPUOS, I have witnessed the strengths and weaknesses of the Commission, but I am becoming increasingly convinced that it is the perfect forum to continue creating guidelines that enrich space law and where the opinions of States should be heard, which course may be different from each other, the key here is to continue maintaining this spirit of cooperation that gave life to this Commission.

¡GRACIAS!

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