

38th Session of UN-SPACE

29 October 2018, Conference Room 8

Introduction

Thank you, Director, for your kind invitation to speak at the 2018 UN-Space session.

I'll begin by referencing the recent address by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly in September. In his main annual speech, he identified two issues which will be critical in our efforts to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the first was climate change, the second, was engagement with new technologies.

SG new tech strategy – commitment 1

To enhance our joint efforts in engaging with new technologies the Secretary-General has released the first ever Strategy on New Technologies. This internal strategy is centred around a series of commitments to action and a group of Principles on which they are based.

From the commitments, the first one, *deepening the UN's internal capacity and exposure to new technologies*, fits well within the framework of this session.

In this commitment, the Secretary-General is encouraging UN staff to stay current with new and emerging technologies in their field. This engagement will allow us to harness the potential of new technologies and help private and public sector partners mitigate the risks.

Considering the success of UNOOSA's work with Jaxa on the KiboCUBE deployment in partnership with the Government of Kenya, FAO's work with satellite imagery in predicting locust swarms, and UNITAR's work in forecasting cyclone impacts in the Pacific, the UN-Space community provides a great example of our organization engaging at the cutting edge of new technology to support humanitarian and development progress.

SG new tech strategy – principle 3

The Commitments of the strategy are based on a series of 5 Principles.

Principle 3 encourages more frequent engagement with partners, both across the UN system and with the private sector. This Session and workshop on public/private partnership, in fulfilment of work identified in the 37th Session in Geneva last year, sets an excellent example for the rest of the system.

The networks that the UN-Space community has built with national space agencies and with emerging "new-space" companies should be expanded. Both new governments and new companies should be aware of and actively engaging with the UN-Space community so that their expertise and natural orientation towards support of the public good can be harnessed towards achievement of the SDGs.

New Space expansion

The space industry is changing.

In 1991, less than 20 percent of the world's launches were undertaken by private firms.

In 2017, more than 50 percent were done by private companies like ULA and Arianespace along with new companies like SpaceX.*

And private companies are not only launching more frequently, but launching more cheaply. Fast and low-cost reusability of rockets has the potential to open-up space to a new generation of companies and countries.

These innovations will also open-up space to new technology solutions to support achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Small satellite networks in low-earth orbit offer the potential to provide fast internet coverage to rural areas and better tracking of ice flows and sea level changes.

Perhaps most importantly, advances in space exploration offer inspiration to a whole new generation of potential young scientists.

I want to encourage you in your work promoting STEM education for young people and your Space for Women programs.

And I wish you the very best for the Session and Workshop today, exploring new technologies and engaging with new partners are fundamental to the Secretary-General's strategy and to our joint success in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you.

*The Economist, *"The Next Generation: The space race is dominated by new contenders"*, 18 October 2018