



## “Should Space become the 18th SDGs?”

High level panel on Space governance organized by the PM of France in Geneva

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### **Excellencies, friends, dear participants,**

Let me start by expressing my gratitude to his excellency Ambassador Rivasseau for extending an invitation to participate in this event.

I am honoured to join such a distinguished panel.

Looking back some 64 years ago, the **launch of Sputnik 1 gave birth to a new era**, sparking a societal, cultural and technical revolution.

At the time, **we understood little about the transformative power of space assets.**

Only **gradually we have come to realize its boundless potential**, adding another dimension to the puzzle – economic revolution.

The space economy itself is growing in value year-by-year.

But the positive implications of space activities spread out much farther.

In advanced economies, **space assets underpin over 10 percent of the Gross Domestic Product**, benefiting many industries and businesses.

They are also **critical for addressing** a wide range of local, national and global **challenges.**

And without them, we would have a hard time **achieving sustainable development.**

The analysis we conducted with the European GNSS Agency, now EUSPA, shows almost **40 percent of targets underpinning the 17 Sustainable Development Goals directly benefit from EO and GNSS.**

Adding SatComs into the equation would take us to well over 50 percent.

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*As we develop future frameworks at any level, space must be part of the solution.*

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What **we need** to get there is not only the **political will and citizen buy-in**, we must also focus on identifying pathways to create both **universal and responsible access to space benefits.**

38 countries in 2000, 50 countries in 2010 and 87 today. The list of countries that have historically managed to operate at least one satellite is expanding every year.

But much remains to be done. Over 100 UN Member States are lagging behind.

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*As the space community, we have a joint responsibility to bridge the intra and interstate gaps in accessing space.*

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Bridging the **space divide is indeed a challenging goal.**

However, it is one that the **Office for Outer Space Affairs strives to pursue through dedication, ambition and international cooperation.**

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*If we come together and combine our strengths, wisdom and ingenuity nothing is impossible.*

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With the great support of many space stakeholders, we are making a real difference through tailored capacity-building activities accommodated to the needs of the 21st century.

Through KiboCUBE, **for example, to date, UNOOSA and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency helped Kenya and Guatemala to become emerging space nations.**

Soon, Mauritius and the winners of the different KiboCUBE rounds will join - a **great manifestation of the power of triangular cooperation through the United Nations.**

I am very proud of these achievements under the Access to Space for All initiative and other activities. And I am looking forward to more accomplishments as we expand our collaborative endeavours.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Rather than reasoning for **Space as a goal in itself, I deem it a powerful vehicle driving us towards a better future** by immensely contributing to the existing goals.

However, **while its importance is recognized at a certain level, it is far from what it deserves.**

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*Space is truly a game-changer and the space community must even more strongly articulate for its placement at the centre of discussions going forward.*

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As the UN strives to overcome contemporary global challenges, it needs to be prepared for the next cycle with space playing an important role.

And in the process, **we cannot forget responsible behaviour given that space is a limited resource.**

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*We must look through the combined lens of sustainability from but also in space as the space sector is changing rapidly.*

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The emergence of new actors and the scaling up of novel avenues shine a ray of hope but also makes the case to remain vigilant.

The **rapid progress translates into opportunities but also challenges** to the safety, security and sustainability of this unique environment.

Underscored by views of legal and policy experts, governments, the private sector and other key stakeholders, the current regime is insufficient to keep pace with all aspects of the unprecedented development.

Such a governance gap raises eyebrows across but also beyond the space community.



The **growing** complexity that defines the contemporary space sector **demands ever more thorough consideration of the existing normative framework.**

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*We must ensure legal regime remains fit for purpose across security, legal, political, scientific and technical domains.*

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Space is now the cornerstone of modern society, and even slight disruptions of critical services could cause significant problems on Earth.

This **collective dependency on space assets fundamentally roots the need for responsible behaviour by all stakeholders.**

Without it, we will fail to bring the benefits of space to everyone in the years to come.

In harmony and through proactive multilateralism, we will succeed in creating a dynamic, prosperous and sustainable future in space.

In this regard, **I warmly welcome the two new workstreams articulated by the Member States** at the UN General Assembly in 2020.

**Resolution 75/36** encourages the Member States to **study existing and potential threats and security risks** to space systems.

It also requests the Secretary-General to collect the views on related themes and consolidate them in a dedicated report.

UNOOSA welcomes the process and interest of states to submit their

respective national positions, underscoring the continued appetite for multilateral solutions under the UN.

In addition, it is **the Common Agenda envisioned in the Declaration on the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the UN.**

The Agenda will be a stepping stone towards a strong collaborative and inclusive system in addressing current and future challenges, enhancing the diplomatic toolbox of the UN Charter to its full potential.

I can only underline that space should be embraced in this document, guiding the UN even better towards the future we want.

I have said this time and time again, but I must reiterate at every apt opportunity.

Looking ahead, there is no scenario that I can see where space would not play a critical role.

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*We must progress in articulating a concrete, common vision for peaceful, prosperous and sustainable space activities.*

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If we continue to be vocal and even amplify our voices, we can together **advance in building the argument that space must be added to the list of areas that deserve protection at the top political level.**

**It is** in the end **the province of all humankind** as envisioned in the Outer Space Treaty.

Thank you.