

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space Scientific and Technical Subcommittee 62nd Session (3-14 February 2025)

Agenda Item 3: “General Exchange of Views”

COSPAR statement by Ms. Pascale EHRENFREUND, President COSPAR, or Mr. Niklas HEDMAN, COSPAR General Counsel

Madame Chair, Distinguished Delegates.

The COSPAR 45th Scientific Assembly, held at the Busan Exhibition and Convention Center (BEXCO), Busan, Republic of Korea, from 13 to 21 July 2024, and attended by over 3,000 participants, was a great success thanks to our dedicated hosts and the vibrant COSPAR community. COSPAR conveys its heartfelt thanks to the Korean local organising team and to the Program Committee.

The 2024 Assembly Opening and Awards Ceremony was followed by the Roundtable of Space Agency Leaders and the Opening Reception. COSPAR was able to gather space leaders from the new Korea AeroSpace Administration (KASA), CNSA, JAXA, NASA, ASI, ISRO and the UAE. Other highlights included topical lunches and several industry-led panels, and public lectures. All seven of the Interdisciplinary Lectures were well attended, with a minimum of 400 attendees each, including one by Mr. Driss El-Hadani, Deputy Director of UNOOSA, on the importance of space research in COPUOS activities and interaction with COSPAR.

A total of 61 organizations, including international scientific unions and committees, intergovernmental entities, national space agencies, and private companies, sponsored many of the scientific events. COSPAR gratefully acknowledges the sponsorship of these organizations. Financial support was used to help ensure the participation in the Assembly of scientists who otherwise would not have been able to attend, the majority of whom were young or from developing countries. For this Scientific Assembly, COSPAR was able to support a large number of early career researchers and researchers from developing countries.

Building on this momentum, we are committed to organizing a forward-looking 46th COSPAR Scientific Assembly in Florence, Italy, 1 to 9 August 2026 under the theme “Sustainable Space Research for the Planet”, in a context where more countries develop their space activities, also leading to more recent applications to become COSPAR Members. Today’s space ecosystem is a complex, interconnected network of scientific, technological, industrial, economic, and governmental elements. Within this framework, COSPAR plays an essential role and needs to collaborate effectively with other space stakeholders to establish mechanisms that incorporate the latest scientific discoveries and research advancements into space policies and regulations.

By fostering collaboration between industry and scientific organizations, in particular through our Committee on Industry Relations, we strengthen this ecosystem, pooling resources, expertise, and innovation to accelerate technological progress and space exploration. Scientific research in space is reaching new heights that underscore the importance of advancing scientific knowledge and preparing for ambitious international cooperative space projects.

International science organizations like COSPAR play a crucial role in shaping this evolving space sector and supporting sustainable space activities. We are keen to increase our interactions with these organizations, as members or partners in joint projects. This is for instance the case with the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO), for which we are proud to have now signed a cooperation Memorandum of Understanding. COSPAR also organized 4 Capacity Building workshops last year in Kenya, Uzbekistan, China, and Thailand to support building of national competences and space education worldwide.

In conclusion, during the Scientific Assembly in Busan, COSPAR introduced its new community-driven Space Weather Roadmap and the recently updated Planetary Protection Policy. COSPAR continues to promote global collaboration by uniting researchers, agencies, and countries to address scientific challenges that are too complex or costly for any single nation. As the space sector continues its rapid expansion, COSPAR's role in coordinating and advancing scientific excellence that underpins international cooperation, and governance, will only become more vital. Looking ahead, COSPAR is preparing for the 6th COSPAR Symposium in Nicosia, Cyprus, scheduled from 3 to 7 November, 2025, under the theme: "Space Exploration 2025: A Symposium on Humanity's Challenges and Celestial Solutions". An informative flyer is being provided to this session of STSC.

I would finally like to call the attention of delegations that in addressing science, international cooperation and governance, COSPAR together with IAA, IAU and MVA have prepared and issued for this present session of STSC CRP 18 on "The need for the designation and preservation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on the Moon".

Thank you for your attention.