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**Committee on the Peaceful
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Space and sustainable development

Towards an Intergenerational Pact for Space Sustainability

Submitted by the Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC)

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I. Summary

1. This paper outlines a proposal from the Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC) for an “Intergenerational Pact for Space Sustainability” (IPASS) to achieve a safe and sustainable space environment fostering a united global space community.
2. The IPASS proposal is detailed in a dedicated Report outlining the united policy position of SGAC in the area of space sustainability. This paper summarises that proposal by discussing three aspects: the vision of the space youth, the prioritization of key topics, and potential avenues to promote the long-term sustainability of space activities.
3. In connection with the 2024 Summit of the Future organised by the United Nations, SGAC invites all Member States and Permanent Observers interested in this topic to join our Intergenerational Dialogue on Space Sustainability, aiming to address key challenges to the sustainable uses of space for the benefit of all humanity, present and future.
4. More information on next steps are provided in the final page of this paper.

II. The vision of the space youth

5. The space youth developed the IPASS proposal to build a safe and sustainable space environment for a unified global space community. We believe that this vision can be realised if IPASS would accomplish the following five key objectives.
6. First, achieve a globally recognised and well-managed space environment, not only in Earth orbit but also beyond, safeguarding both current and future space operations as well as the benefits of space for Earth, including for climate action, disaster management, astronomy, and global connectivity.
7. Second, encourage the implementation of the 2019 Guidelines for Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities (LTS Guidelines), and consider them as initial building blocks for the development of an international framework on Space Traffic Management.
8. Third, facilitate the implementation of the United Nations “Space2030” Agenda and the use of space applications and technologies for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
9. Fourth, establish a collaborative and more inclusive global space community that upholds principles of sustainability, equity, and shared responsibility.
10. Fifth and final, nurture a future generation that is knowledgeable, engaged, and capable of advancing sustainable space exploration and stewardship.

III. Priority areas

11. As discussed in the IPASS Report, achieving space sustainability calls for a holistic approach. However, as is customary in any project, a starting point is essential. At the minimum, the IPASS should address the following five priority areas.
12. Multilateral Governance of Space Issues, Inclusivity and Youth Participation In Space.

In this area we note the following two objectives:

- i. Increase active participation in a globally inclusive space governance framework that ensures safe and sustainable space activities, also through increased multi-stakeholder participation, e.g. in the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space as the central multilateral forum for the further development of space law and policy by expanding institutional mechanisms for participation by civil society and allowing commercial actors to acquire observer status.

- ii. Adopt dedicated institutional measures to ensure the meaningful participation of representatives from recognised youth organizations in the work of international fora, within and beyond the United Nations system.

13. International collaboration and cooperation in the exploration and use of space.

In this area we note the following two objectives:

- i. Develop dedicated tools and practices for enhanced information sharing, among others to implement Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty, such as for example a global platform enhancing transparency and cooperative problem-solving.
- ii. Promote capacity building in space law and policy to ensure that emerging nations can actively participate in the development of key rules for the sustainable use of space and its resources.

14. Space Traffic Management, including Dark and Quiet Skies.

In this area we note the following two objectives:

- i. Regularly exchange and use lessons learnt about national, regional, and international tools and practices on the way towards adopting and enforcing shared standards and best practices for space traffic management to ensure safe and sustainable orbital pathways.
- ii. Develop and implement measures to reduce light pollution and radio frequency interference, in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

15. Space Debris.

In this area we note the following three objectives:

- i. Develop norms, fix milestones, and support technologies for the incremental removal of all space debris, taking into due consideration related scientific, strategic and legal aspects.
- ii. Take steps towards ensuring that all space activities, particularly those carried out by commercial entities, are conducted keeping in mind the space environment, with a view towards the long-term sustainability of our orbital resources.
- iii. Ensure swift implementation of the 2019 Guidelines on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities for a circular approach based on reusability and interoperability.

16. Sustainability Beyond Earth Orbit.

In this area we note the following three objectives:

- i. Ensure the long-term sustainability of activities beyond Earth Orbit, e.g. lunar activities, by proactively and regularly evaluating their impact on the outer space environment, including the need for appropriate mitigation measures.
- ii. Commit to always limit in time and size all territorial-based uses of the Moon and other celestial bodies, and develop an evolving list of sites and resources internationally recognized as scarce.
- iii. Pledge to extract and use space resources with due regard to the corresponding interests of all others, with special consideration to the needs of developing countries and future generations. Special diligence is required, since all exploration activities influence the natural surroundings of celestial bodies and thus may deprive science of the opportunity to investigate their original conditions.

IV. Potential Avenues to Achieve the Pact's Objectives

17. SGAC is convinced that there is not a singular path to realize the aforementioned goals. Currently, the international community employs a combined approach of both national and international instruments, both binding and non-binding, to address critical space sustainability challenges. Our approach aims to be equally adaptable. Thus, the Pact contemplates three primary avenues to achieve its objectives.

18. Creating Binding Agreements.

Develop and sign effective international agreements that are legally binding, ensuring commitment and compliance from all stakeholders, particularly to ensure peaceful, sustainable, and safe space activities for the benefit of all.

19. Promoting Technological Advancements.

In this area we note the following three avenues:

- i. Encourage investment in and adoption of innovative technologies for improved space operations, environmental protection, and disaster risk reduction, bridging the digital divide and economic growth.
- ii. Coordinate a digital governance framework to guide global, regional, and national approaches around shared principles, priorities, and objectives to ensure that technological advancements contribute to more sustainable space activities as well as the use of space technology and data for the benefit of the SDGs (see: Space2030 Agenda).
- iii. Organize a multi-stakeholder dialogue and cooperation for this purpose, such as the proposed annual Digital Cooperation Forum.

20. Global Educational and Advocacy Programs.

In this area we note the following two avenues:

- i. Support and participate in educational initiatives and advocacy campaigns aimed at raising awareness and fostering a culture of sustainability in space.
- ii. Expand and strengthen diverse and inclusive youth participation in national, international, and United Nations-led decision-making processes through dedicated avenues for including the viewpoint of the youth, a standing United Nations Youth Town Hall, as well as through intergenerational dialogues.

V. Conclusion

21. This paper condenses the results of over a year of intense work specifically focused on the long-term sustainability of space activities. Throughout this period, SGAC engaged with stakeholders globally to study space sustainability and explore the necessary actions to achieve it. SGAC also extensively analysed applicable legal frameworks, providing a robust foundation for our understanding and recommendations.

22. In developing its proposal, SGAC pursued three primary objectives: first, to formulate concrete recommendations for SGAC to approach and advocate for space sustainability; second, to gain a nuanced understanding of the space sector's position on these issues, encompassing perspectives from all stakeholders; and third, to form, channel, and advocate the united voice of the space youth, bearing in mind the interests of future generations.

23. SGAC is committed to ensuring that these recommendations not only resonate within our community but also contribute to the broader discourse on space sustainability. It is our view that these efforts will contribute significantly to shaping a more sustainable future in space exploration and utilization.

24. SGAC firmly believes that while there is no singular path toward space sustainability, there is one community. Space sustainability can only be achieved by fostering synergy among stakeholders and acting collectively, guided by a shared vision. This vision, adaptable at various levels - international or national, binding, or non-binding, general or specific - allows us to work together towards a common goal. After all, space is not the problem of a few but the responsibility of all.

25. At the 61st Session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, SGAC kicked off the Intergenerational Dialogue on Space Sustainability at a side event on “Space, Youth, and Future Generations”, co-organised with UNOOSA and the Government of Austria.

26. The Dialogue continued during a Policy Symposium organised by UNOOSA and the Portuguese Space Agency, where SGAC moderated a panel discussion on Youth and Multi-Stakeholder Contributions for Intergenerational Sustainability.

27. At 63rd Session of the Legal Subcommittee, SGAC continued to provide the perspective of the space youth on the peaceful, safe, and sustainable uses of space through statements under items 4,5,9 and 12, as well as a technical presentation under item 12.

28. At the UN/Portugal Conference on the Management and Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, SGAC participated in the Youth and Civil Society panel and further provided inputs for the development of the Lisbon Declaration on Outer Space, which SGAC fully supports as a key contribution for inclusion within the Pact for the Future.

29. SGAC also continues to deliver the recommendations of the space youth to the Co-Facilitators of both the Pact for the Future and the Declaration on Future Generations, by providing written suggestions and making oral interventions at the virtual consultations.

30. Looking ahead, SGAC looks forward to continuing the Intergenerational Dialogue on Space Sustainability at the 67th Session of the Committee, as well as at the Summit for Space Sustainability organised by Secure World Foundation in July 2024.

For any questions or feedback, please email the SGAC Chairs at un@spacegeneration.org.
