

UN-Space High-Level Panel

UNITED NATIONS: REINFORCING SYNERGIES FOR UNISPACE+50 AND BEYOND

21 June 2018, 13:00-14:00, M Plenary room

**OPENING STATEMENT BY SIMONETTA DI PIPPO,
DIRECTOR, OFFICE FOR OUTER SPACE AFFAIRS**

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

I warmly welcome you all the UN-Space High-Level Panel that bridges together the UNISPACE+50 High-Level Segment and UN-Space, the United Nations inter-agency mechanism for cooperation in outer space activities.

This Panel today offers a platform for the leadership of the United Nations entities, departments and offices to engage in a dialogue, exchange ideas, and to seek solutions and strategies to advance the strategic role of space science, technology and applications, as well as space law and policy, for sustainable development through the work of the United Nations system.

Distinguished delegates,

Our COPUOS community, that agreed in mid-1970s to institute the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities to respond to the need for increased coordination of activities relating to the peaceful uses of outer space within the United Nations system, does not need to be briefed on the history of UN-Space. However, for the benefit of broader public, I would like to mention only three key facts on UN-Space:

1. United Nations General Assembly mandates UN-Space, under the leadership of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, to continue to examine how space science and technology and their applications can contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and encourages entities of the United Nations system to participate, as appropriate, in UN-Space coordination efforts.
2. UN-Space generates biennial reports of the Secretary-General on coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system. The most recent report outlines directions and anticipated results for the period 2018-2019 and will be available to delegations at this session of the Committee¹.
3. UN-Space also produces special reports addressing wide range of issues, such as new and emerging technologies; Africa; climate change; agriculture and food security, global health, transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, and space weather.

¹ A/AC.105/1179

Distinguished delegates,

It is important that we also recognise that the aims of UN-Space are achieved by collaboration both across and within the UN system. In this regard, UN-Space also offers a forum to nurture bilateral agreements and joint activities:

In 2017, for example, the Office joined forces with the World Health Organization to organize the UN/WHO/Switzerland Conference on Strengthening Space Cooperation for Global Health in Geneva on 23-25 August 2017 to foster utilization of space-based assets, data and technologies in addressing global health.

Together with the Office for Disarmament Affairs, UNOOSA organized, on 12 October 2017 in New York, a joint half-day panel discussion of the General Assembly First Committee and Fourth Committee on possible challenges to space security and sustainability, as mandated by GA resolution 71/90.

The Office cooperated with United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to organize a “Space for women” expert meeting on 4-6 October 2018 in New York to sharing ideas and expertise regarding space and women, and promoting efforts to encourage the participation of women and girls in science, technology, engineering and mathematics education. The Office is eager to start the development of the “Space for Women” project as endorsed during the Meeting.

The Office continues to work with ICAO on subject matters of high relevance to the space and aviation communities. The series of Aerospace Symposia that successfully started in Canada in 2015 and UAE in 2016, continued with the ICAO/UNOOSA Aerospace Symposium held in Vienna in August 2017.

A Memorandum of Understanding was concluded at the end of 2017 with the United Nations Development Programme, in an effort to establish better coordination in the use of space science and technology to support and promote global sustainable development initiatives of the United Nations.

And so much more to come – we are continuing to expand our relationships with other UN entities, with a specific focus on the Vienna based-organisations.

Distinguished delegates,

This is our fourteenth Open Session of UN-Space, and this event is the endeavour to provide an interactive forum to discuss space-related activities of United Nations entities with Governments, national authorities, private sector and civil society for the benefit of its Member States and other stakeholders.

Aiming to achieve a stronger focus of overall policies and strategies on a particular issue of interest to Member States, UN-Space open informal sessions featured: education and training in space-related areas; disaster management; space-derived geospatial data; public-private partnerships and innovative funding approaches; Africa; emergency communications; climate change; agriculture and food security; resilient human settlements, and sustainable development.

Today, the Panel will look at how United Nations entities could further reinforce synergies and support member States in the framework of UNISPACE+50 and adopt a joint UN-Space statement, which will be made available on the website of the Office and distributed to delegations as

Conference Room Paper 24. The Office for Outer Space Affairs once again welcomes you to the Panel and looks forward to a fruitful discussion and to making this Panel a success.

I will now invite the three panellists, to start the first part of this panel discussion by showcasing activities undertaken by their respective entities.

Panellists:

Mr. Yury Fedotov, Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Mr. Hiroshi Kuniyoshi, Deputy Director-General, United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Mr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary, CTBTO Preparatory Commission

Mr. Stephen Mathias, Assistant-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, United Nations Office of Legal Affairs

Mr. Bruce McCarron, Director, Operations, Legal and Technical Services, United Nations Development Programme

Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific