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Space policies and programmes of international organizations with particular regard to the participation of developing countries (2)

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## TOWARDS A UNITED NATIONS SPACE POLICY

**Abstract**

The United Nations and a number of its various entities have, for a long time, been sophisticated users of space applications. However, current space activities, policies and institutions are outgrowths of rationales, programs and trends set in motion in the early years of the Space Age. In order to adapt to future challenges, both stability and change are required and there is therefore the necessity to adapt the UN to the needs of the 21st Century. There is the need for an increased coordination of UN activities relating to the peaceful uses of outer space to find holistic solutions to current and emerging global problems.

Following the accelerating internationalization and globalization of the space sector, non-State actors are now also extending their involvement in space activities. The space environment is changing rapidly and in the next decade there will be major challenges in terms of the long-term sustainability of space activities, forcing the global space community to make significant decisions about these issues. Too much is at stake for the UN! To maximise the benefits derived from space applications by all countries in general and by the UN system in particular, the UN will need to develop a space policy which adopts a holistic approach to support peaceful uses of outer space.

A UN space policy that properly addresses the long-term requirement for a coherent, global space policy is of the utmost importance. Such a policy would establish a more coordinated approach to global space activities and define the necessary coordinating mechanisms to implement such an approach. The aim of this paper is therefore to present the preliminary elements of a UN space policy.