

29th IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE POLICY, REGULATIONS AND ECONOMICS (E3)  
Regional cooperation in space: policies, governance and legal tools (1)

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TOWARDS A LONG-TERM GOAL OF ESTABLISHING ASIAN-PACIFIC SPACE AGENCY - THE  
NEXT GENERATION PERSPECTIVE

**Abstract**

The Asia-Pacific region hosts a number of organizations to promote space cooperation at a regional level - most notably APSCO (Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization) and APRSAF (Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum). Yet these initiatives have been limited both in scope of activities and the number of countries in participation - for technological and political reasons. The experience of Asian-Pacific regional space cooperation, particularly in comparison to that of Europe, indicates that the regional space agency in Asia-Pacific region cannot be established in near-term nor it can be a simple reproduction of the successful model of European Space Agency (ESA); setting up a regional space agency would require long-term consideration as well as a unique model that takes into account various conditions of the region. Under such consideration, students and young professionals of the Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC), as part of its regional workshop, discussed the ways take the Asia-Pacific regional space cooperation to the next level with the long-term goal of establishing a regional space agency in 2030-2040 time frame - about the time when the current generation of young professionals in the space field would assume senior positions in the space sector. The theme was discussed as specific working group topic at the 1st and 2nd Asia-Pacific Space Generation Workshop (AP-SGW) in 2014 and 2015, held in conjunction with APRSAF. In the first year, the Working Group addressed the following key questions: Can and should a regional space agency be created? What can we learn from the evolution of the Asian-Pacific regional space cooperation and the experience of Europe to envision future regional space cooperation in the region? In the second year, the focus was given to emerging space nations, particularly ASEAN countries, in recognition that space activities of these nations are rapidly growing and have the potential to play a critical role in shaping the regional space cooperation in the future. This paper presents the conclusions of these working group discussions and elaborates some of the key topics that could be addressed in the future AP-SGW workshops under the theme.