

30th IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE POLICY, REGULATIONS AND ECONOMICS (E3)
International Cooperation - a cornerstone of 50 years UN Space Law and space diplomacy (1)

Author: Mr. Massimo Pellegrino
United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), Switzerland

UNISPACE+50: SHARED VISION, COMMON ACTION

Abstract

UNISPACE+50 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the first UNISPACE conference, held in 1968. In June 2018, the international space community will be together in Vienna to articulate a new long-term vision for space around four pillars (space economy, space society, space accessibility, and space diplomacy), which will serve as a guide in shaping the future of space and in driving space investments. As a product of UNISPACE III, the Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC) attaches great importance to this conference series and aims to contribute to the wider strategic reflection promoted by UNOOSA in the lead-up to UNISPACE+50, by bringing into the process the views of the future generation of space leaders.

Building on both the conclusions of a working group on UNISPACE+50 by SGAC and the Dubai Declaration, the objective of this paper is three-fold. First, it proposes a new long-term vision for space, as envisioned by UNISPACE+50. Second, it offers concrete ideas for action in support of such a vision. Third, it identifies the role that the young professionals space community can play in the UNISPACE+50 process and ensuing debates, including through the action of SGAC.

The paper argues that the pursuit of the proposed vision statement requires work along six areas of action. These include strengthening the outer space regime and global space governance, by elaborating ethical principles of responsible behavior in outer space and ensuring compliance with international agreements; making international cooperation the norm for future space activities, recognizing it as a long-term investment for all parties involved; conducting space activities to generate tangible societal and economic benefits for all humankind; building capacity across space markets and value chains; placing outer space topics on as many national political agendas as possible; making the space sector a leading force in major technology development.

The paper concludes that the young professionals space community is well placed to inform these actions and the means with which to accomplish them, as well as to engage and liaise more closely with both the wider space and non-space communities to ensure future buy-in and active collaboration. Not only could these actions contribute to nurturing the strategic reflection promoted by UNOOSA in the framework of the UNISPACE+50 process, but they could also offer organizations, such as SGAC, potential avenues for the future and ideas about how to evolve and move forward in partnership with their own stakeholders.