

## 6 Achieving global engagement – summarising introduction

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Session 3, devoted to the topic “Achieving global engagement”, began with a presentation by Xavier Pasco (FRS, France) on overcoming international obstacles. The gist of his presentation was to stress that States’ space activities are primarily driven by political considerations, not market forces, and therefore tend to amplify power differences. At the international level, this translates into some States being members of the “space-faring nations club”, which defines the space security political landscape, while other nations who are outside of the club benefit from the development of space-based services but do not participate in shaping their political and legal framework. Nations who are members of the space club share some common concerns, particularly the security and safety of space operations (space debris, space weather), while nations outside the club stress that rulemaking has to take account of the overall interests of nations and international organisations using space assets. As a consequence, only win-win scenarios are acceptable, where both members and non-members of the space club benefit equally from “rules of the road” aimed at a fair and responsible use of space. A good deal of institutional creativity will be needed to achieve this.

The second speaker, Driss El Hadani (CRTS, Morocco), addressed the question “How to engage present and future actors” He stressed that the increasing diversity of actors in space (47 States have spacecraft in orbit), the emergence of a new category of space-faring nations (India, China, Brazil, etc.), and the development of commercial operators and commercial uses of space systems, is leading to new threats to the orbital environment. The interest of the developing world in space applications for their economic and social development, particularly in civil security, translates into an increasing awareness that space policymaking is important for them. Therefore, fair and responsible use of space goes much beyond the issue of space assets and their security – it now includes all applications of space systems to Earth-bound problems. A strong political commitment by the actors is essential to make any progress (e.g., the EU–Africa partnership, the GEOSS process). Developing nations will need to build a well-established space policy/strategy going much beyond the single project approach, and will need strong regional organisations, as well as encouraging the involvement of the private sector. Easier access to orbital information, to scientific data and to environmental

data is a prerequisite for developing nations to play an active role. As for international cooperation, clear vision translating into clearly stated objectives, combined with strong cooperation models, preferably based on existing structures, will be required. Any new institutional mechanism set in place to ensure a fair and responsible use of space will need to be based on a shared “ethic” of space activities, not on market-driven rules.

The third speaker, Professor Kazuto Suzuki (University of Hokkaido, Japan), addressed the role of international organisations for a fair and responsible use of space. He started with an interesting series of theoretical concerns based on some traditional assumptions about international relations and organisations which are not entirely true in outer space activities: the actual behaviour of States is sometimes not consistent with their international obligations. In addition, there are limitations to what an international organisation can achieve if its Member States do not implement its rulemaking. After reviewing the authority, the “power resource”, that can be vested in an international organisation, including its agenda-setting and norm-making authority, Prof. Suzuki discussed the limits of this power: How to convince Member States to abide by its rules when it is against their perceived best interest? How to encourage States that are not members of an international organisation to follow its rules and norms? How to give an international organisation binding power, including sanctions? According to Prof. Suzuki, international organisations can overcome their limitations if one Member State, or a group of Member States, exercises strong leadership and if it builds on similar international norms developed elsewhere. For outer space activities that are of interest to all States, developed or emerging, as well as to civil, military and commercial operators, a strong moral role can be played by an international organisation. With respect to establishing an international norm for a fair and responsible use of space, the attitude of major space-faring nations will be key for its credibility, but it will also need to be of mutual benefit to all actors, with an appropriate balance between obligations and sanctions.

The fourth speaker, Ms. Agnieszka Lukaszczyk, Secretary General of the Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC), addressed the issue of how to involve the world’s youth. The creation of the SGAC in 1999 during the Unispace III Conference in Vienna is a good example of a wide-ranging action to involve the younger generation worldwide. Its vision is “Advancing human development through peaceful use of Outer Space”. SGAC has members from 87 countries who are actively involved in interactive discussions on issues affecting the future of space activities such as space debris, space traffic management, governance and conflict avoidance. She concluded by presenting some recommendations developed by the

SGAC including one on establishing a set of “Rules of the Road” to safeguard outer space and one on “Space Governance” (specifically lunar governance and property rights).

The discussions that followed the four presentations first addressed the role of private and commercial actors. It was recognised that the private sector is playing an increasingly important role acting within the rules and regulations agreed upon by States at the international level. In outer space, States are ultimately responsible for the acts of private companies under their jurisdiction. On this particular issue, however, Theresa Hitchens pointed out that the term “responsibility” (of States) is not understood everywhere as having the same meaning. It was pointed out that the increasing role of the commercial sector in outer space could also be recognised through mechanisms of representation similar to those introduced many years ago by the ITU in the area of telecommunications. The issue of increasing the role of COPUOS and of modernising its mode of operation was addressed. Driss El Hadani made several suggestions as to how to enhance participation of Member States, increase resources available to the Secretariat (UNOOSA) and improve the efficiency of the annual inter-agency meeting. Ambassador Ciro Arevalo emphasised the recent rejuvenation of COPUOS and his intention to push for a more proactive COPUOS during his chairmanship of the committee. The notion of the “club” of space-faring nations was also discussed. As space applications develop and touch upon so many aspects of modern society, all nations are interested in the future of space-based services. In addition, as Ambassador Arevalo stressed, many developing countries are keen to master not only the user terminals and software of space applications, but also to learn to master the hardware of space systems, hence the increasing number of less developed nations who buy and operate their own satellite systems.