

ICAO/UNOOSA AEROSPACE SYMPOSIUM

Emerging Space Activities and Civil Aviation – Challenges and Opportunities

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Welcome Remarks by

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Distinguished participants,

Good morning and welcome to the joint ICAO/UNOOSA Aerospace Symposium. It is a great pleasure for me to be here today at this unique inter-agency coordination effort between my Office and ICAO on subject matters of utmost relevance to the space and aviation communities and future cooperation between our two entities in this regard.

The topic of this symposium - *emerging space activities and civil aviation – challenges and opportunities* - is encompassing what represents a pivotal issue as more and more actors enter the space arena and it is becoming more and more evident that developments in future aerospace activities will impact on the application and implementation of space law and air law instruments.

The main objective for these coming three days will be to bring together representatives of the aviation community and the space community at governmental and non-governmental level, including the commercial and private space sector, to explore existing regulatory mechanisms and practices in aviation and space transportation. We will explore challenges and opportunities related to emerging space activities, in particular commercial space transportation and suborbital flights.

In order to facilitate the strengthening of a dialogue between the two communities, this joint ICAO/UNOOSA Aerospace Symposium can only be just the first step in our collaboration.

As the Secretariat of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), UNOOSA is concerned with space law making and international cooperation in outer space activities. COPUOS, together with its subsidiary bodies, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Legal Subcommittee, provides a unique platform at the global level for comprehensive deliberations on all aspects of the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. The five UN treaties on outer space, the five sets of principles and declarations on space activities, the space debris mitigation guidelines of the Committee and the safety framework for the use of Nuclear Power Sources in outer space activities, developed together with IAEA, have been negotiated and adopted by this Committee.

Among the areas covered by COPUOS which have direct relevance to the theme of this particular Aerospace Symposium, are, for example, the considerations of COPUOS on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, which will lead to a set of guidelines in enhancing the safety of space operations; consideration on definition of and legal issues related to aerospace objects and suborbital flights; the establishment of coordination mechanisms on handling of near-Earth object (asteroid) impact threats; and the consideration of space weather prediction, forecasting and monitoring mechanisms.

The inter-relationship and dialogue between major space faring nations and emerging space nations relating to increased international cooperation and capacity-building efforts for the benefit of developing countries provide fundamental prerequisites for success over the years. The space agenda is evolving and becoming more complex, not least considering the broader concept of space security, as well as the expanding commercial space sector. The nature of space activities is evolving to meet those realities.

Distinguished participants,

Those factors are of fundamental importance to the overall work of the Office. Let me therefore to come back to UNOOSA activities and perspectives. UNOOSA has a strategic and, in the UN system, unique role with its broad mandate and competence to deal with the full spectrum of space activities from science and technology to law and policy and implements the decisions of the General Assembly and COPUOS. With regard to the present Aerospace Symposium, I would mark the following activities of the Office as directly relevant to the Symposium objectives.

As Executive Secretariat to the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG), UNOOSA promotes tangible international cooperation and coordination to ensure that global navigation satellite systems (GNSS) services provide global coverage in satellite-based positioning, navigation, and timing for the benefit of all.

In the near term, we are approaching the global space endeavour encompassing four distinct pillars determining overarching space governance, namely space economy; space society; space accessibility; and space diplomacy. The Office works towards addressing those pillars strategically in its core activities.

UNOOSA also leads the Inter Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities (UN-Space), which is the central inter-agency coordination mechanisms in the UN system on overarching space matters, in particular in relation to the global development agenda.

As another example of inter-agency coordination, UNOOSA presently works closely with ITU in developing an information handout on issues related to registration, authorization, debris mitigation and frequency management with respect to small and very small satellites, for the benefit of space actors intending to operate such satellites.

We are delighted to be able to extend this inter-agency coordination bilaterally with ICAO today on subject matters of utmost relevance to the space and aviation communities and future cooperation between our two entities in this context.

Distinguished participants,

With the evolution of the space awareness in society, COPUOS is positioning itself at the forefront of the sustainable development process tackling issues related to transparency and confidence-building measures and the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. Essential elements covering crucial areas of enhancing the safety of space operations, include space debris mitigation and monitoring, accuracy of orbital data, conjunction assessment, tools for space situational awareness, models and tools for space weather prediction, notification procedures of launches and controlled re-entries, and standards for sharing orbital information.

In this context, the role of UNOOSA in providing one of the existing most important tools for enhancing transparency and confidence in space activities should be noted. The Office is mandated since four decades to maintain the central United Nations Register on Objects Launched into Outer Space, under the obligation of the Registration Convention of 1975. The Register functions as the core mechanism for treaty based transparency and confidence-building.

It is important to recognize in this context the impact of the 2007 General Assembly resolution on registration practice (resolution 62/101) where we note that several States increasingly use the recommendations of that resolution to provide additional and voluntary registration data for the purpose of the UN Register on the change of status of space objects in orbit, information on de-orbiting and similar information they deem important for the purpose of the registration regime and as appropriate to enhance the safety of space operations.

I mention specifically the registration regime because together with the established procedures of discharging the responsibilities of the United Nations Secretary-General under the United Nations treaties on outer space, in particular the Outer Space Treaty, UNOOSA is vested with a mandate to assist in global efforts to enhance international governance in the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. In the longer-term perspective we follow closely trends and development in the area of space traffic management considerations.

Distinguished participants,

Given the growing number of benefits derived from space science and technology applications, the conduct of space activities by States, intergovernmental and non-governmental entities, as well as the commercial and private sector, continues to expand rapidly. Space tools are fundamental to meeting the challenges to humanity and sustainable development and the overarching space security environment in its broader sense caters for global space governance. It is in this context I see outstanding prospects for strengthened involvement and exchange of experience among all relevant stakeholders in this emerging field of innovative space activities and civil aviation. I therefore look forward to this joint ICAO/UNOOSA Aerospace Symposium and to an engaging dialogue over the upcoming days and beyond.

Welcome!
