



Secure World Foundation
Exchange of Views Statement
United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

June 2016

Mr. Chairman, the Secure World Foundation expresses its congratulations on your election to leadership of this critically important Committee. You and I first met twelve years ago through our shared service to the International Space University and I am a witness over all the intervening time to your capacity to nurture progress and fresh thinking on even highly challenging questions. We also congratulate your predecessor, Mr Azzedine Oussedik for his successful term. We are thankful that the privilege of permanent observer status that this Committee has accorded to us presented us with our first opportunity to work with Mr Oussedik and to benefit from his wisdom and counsel.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, our statement to this year's session of The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee detailed numerous Secure World Foundation activities that have supported the critically important mission and work of COPUOS, other elements of the United Nations system, and the broad community of space participants in advancing peaceful uses of outer space and space sustainability. Since that time we have continued substantial work and close cooperation with the Office for Outer Space Affairs and UNIDIR within the UN System. Our work also involved close cooperation with other representatives of civil society, including many fellow permanent observers.

Looking forward, we anticipate many more opportunities to cooperate with the UN System in pursuing peaceful uses of outer space during the rest of this year:

- We will co-sponsor and attend the 10th UN Conference on Space Law and Policy.
- We will be present this September in Mexico for the UN/IAF Workshop series.
- We will be present in New York for meetings of The General Assembly's Fourth Committee as it takes up the space policy elements of its Agenda and receives the report of this Committee.
- And we will be present and deeply involved in the High Level Forum preparing UNISPACE +50 when it meets in Dubai this coming November.

Even in the 20 or more activities remaining on our work plan for 2016 that are not directly connected to work with the United Nations system, members of this Committee would recognize that the themes we are seeking to advance are consistent with the Committee's work. Cooperative activities and capacity building work with multilateral institutions such as the Group on Earth Observations and the Committee on Earth Observing Satellites and collaboration with member states such as Mexico, the host of this year's International Astronautical Congress and the Netherlands, host of an important study group looking at the issues raised by the growing potential for accessing and using physical resources present on celestial bodies all complement the work of this Committee.

We believe that there are many reasons for the significant convergence of our work and that of this Committee. A few of those reasons deserve special mention:

- We both benefit from the extraordinary dedication and quality counsel of the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs. That a staff of such small size and limited resources gets so much accomplished facilitates many elements of our work and is a source of inspiration for us.
- We both draw inspiration from the Vienna Declaration that resulted from UNISPACE III and we build much of our respective work plans on advancing its goals.
- Notwithstanding the above, we both recognize that rapid changes make the need for a new UNISPACE Conference timely and critical.
- We both recognize that broadly focused documents such as the Sendai accord, the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, and COP21 Agreement have numerous implications for space activity and will place special demands on the unique capabilities of space technology to meet their ambitious objectives.
- With common source documents driving our agendas, we should not be surprised that we often find ourselves working side by side not only in this chamber but around the world.

I am confident that notwithstanding the difficult work ahead of us, the work product of UNISPACE +50 will similarly become an influential document in the development of this Committee's work plan and ours. Secure World Foundation will devote intense physical and intellectual effort to support the work of states in developing the action agenda that UNISPACE +50 is fully expected to produce. We have also pledged to provide multi-year financial support to this initiative.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, we have provided delegations with a copy of a book we have recently published in cooperation with the Aerospace Technology Working Group, The International Institute of Space Commerce, and The International Space University. Entitled Space in the 21st Century: Discovery, Innovation, Sustainability, the book addresses several perspectives on sustainable use of space. Many chapters were authored by people who have contributed substantially to the evolution of thinking on space sustainability as participants in the work of this Committee. By this time next year I hope to be able to make copies of our Handbook for the use of new actors in space activity similarly available, and I take this opportunity to thank the experts from around the world who have freely contributed their expertise as we work to create this important volume.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, I share with you the sadness we have experienced this week as we learned of the death of a distinguished and dedicated member of our Advisory Committee, Ms. Patti Grace Smith who passed away this past Sunday. She leaves behind her a substantial record of accomplishment in the area of commercial spaceflight and its complex relationship with government oversight and international responsibility. We at SWF will deeply miss her and her wise counsel.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, on behalf of Secure World Foundation thank you for the opportunity to share our perspectives and update this Committee on our activities in support of its program of work. We look forward to working with you and the Committee during a term of office that coincides with the historic work in preparation for UNISPACE +50.

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