



Secure World Foundation
Keynote Remarks
International Best Practices for Outer Space Sustainability

October 2016

There are many familiar faces in this room. For those people Secure World Foundation is well known as a partner in the hard work that has brought us to this point.

For the rest, suffice it to say that Secure World Foundation has described its mission for many years as the pursuit of cooperative solutions to space sustainability.

So, it is natural that we gather today to acknowledge major progress on space sustainability guidelines that has only been made possible through international and inter-institutional cooperation.

In some ways I'm welcoming you to a celebration.

Six hard years of work has brought us twelve guidelines to support the long term sustainability of space activities:

Guidelines adopted among countries who have not always found consensus easy to achieve.

From practical affirmations of how to best fulfill obligations under the space treaties to foundational guidance on the sharing of critical data about satellites, debris, and weather, we have coaxed progress out of what looked at times like barren soil.

To add to the celebration, we are hearing encouraging reports from the intersessional meetings of the COPUOS Working Group on Long Term Sustainability of Space Activities.

These reports fuel hope that further consensus will bring more agreed guidelines to the table next year.

But, of course, I also welcome you to any event that will provide lunch.

And as those of us who were thrust by great writers like Arthur C Clarke and Robert Heinlein into careers in the space sector know all too well, "There is no such thing as a free lunch!"

In fact as today's program will attest, there is much work to be done.

Whether you see the guidelines as soft law or no-law-at-all, they will still have to stand the same test as hard law or sound policy: they will need to impact behavior.

As we review the track that brought us here and chart the course to come, I hope we can bear in mind that the way forward will pass through the seminal work of UNISPACE+50 and will carry the weight and aspirations of other broad agreements like the Sustainable, Development Goals, the Sendai accord, and COP-21.

So as we get back to the hard work so many of us in this room are used to sharing, I still invite you to think of it as a celebration knowing that having kept alive the principle of using space for peaceful

purposes, we now get to show how together we can focus those purposes on meeting the greatest challenges of the one planet we all share.

Celebrate, work hard, and prosper.

Secure World Foundation

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