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# The Fair and Responsible Use of Space: An International Perspective

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# Preface

The International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) pursues the goal of developing astronautics for peaceful purposes. Approaching its 50th year of existence, it recognises individuals who have distinguished themselves in a related branch of science and technology through full or corresponding membership. Currently, there are more than 1200 members from 75 countries, representing outstanding and renowned experts in their respective field of work. Academy members contribute to international endeavours and cooperate in the advancement of aerospace science.

Academy activities are supported by various scientific symposia and meetings as well as by the work of six specialised commissions. A special role is played by the “Cosmic Studies” and “Position Papers” on relevant issues in various areas of the Academy’s scope. Further important publications are the *Acta Astronautica*, *Proceedings of Symposia*, *Dictionaries*, a *Yearbook* and the IAA e-newsletter. These communications cover a broad range of topics and they reflect the Academy’s intention to serve as a discussion platform for different questions within the Academy’s domain of interest.

One issue area that is gaining in importance is the fair and responsible use of outer space, given that space applications are at the heart of everyday interaction and communication. More and more actors are becoming involved in space activities, often with a lack of coordination and coherence. There is a need to investigate how an equitable, just and sustainable utilisation of space can be achieved for both established and new space actors. In this regard, aspects related to space benefits for developing countries, the peaceful use of outer space and Space Situational Awareness need to be considered. Moreover, the role of the United Nations as well as questions of data sharing and Space Traffic Management have to be discussed. This has to be complemented by deliberations on governance issues of the international system as well as by new thoughts on how to shape international cooperation.

Against this background, the IAA has patronaged and co-sponsored the conference on “The Fair and Responsible Use of Space: An International Perspective”. The event took place in November 2008, and it was organised jointly with the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI), which was also the local host in Vienna, and the Secure World Foundation (SWF). These institutions brought in their resources, their expertise and their experience, creating the added value and synergy needed to adequately approach such a multi-layered topic. For the Academy, it was a pleasure to see that numerous of its members acted as speakers or moderators.

Preceding this book, ESPI published the document “10 Steps to Achieve Fair and Responsible Use of Space” as another immanent outcome of the conference. This text will shortly be translated into an official “Position Paper” of the IAA. The Academy considers the whole project a highly successful one and sees it as an excellent basis for future efforts in this critical domain.

*Jean-Michel Contant*  
*Secretary General*  
*International Academy of Astronautics*

## Foreword by the Editors

The issue of a sustainable conduct of space activities is gaining importance, since modern societies depend on space and its applications. Everyday life would be seriously degraded, if not impossible, without the utilisation of space-based science and technology. This holds true for the present generation, but also for the ones to come. Accordingly, space has to be preserved for the future. Sustainability can be achieved through a fair and responsible use of space. Given the growing number of space actors and their diverse nature, the time to think and act is now.

This will involve a number of interrelated issues. First of all, relevant facts and background information like the current state of the space environment and its potential degradation will have to be considered. Moreover, concrete rules facilitating the fair and responsible use of space will need to be devised and enforced. Finally, ways to involve all stakeholders and to achieve engagement at a global scale will have to be found. These issue areas cannot be tackled separately from each other, but will have to be treated in a unified and cross-cutting way.

With these thoughts in mind, the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI) hosted a conference on “The Fair and Responsible Use of Space: An International Perspective” on 20–21 November 2008 at Vienna. The conference was organised jointly with the International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) and the Secure World Foundation (SWF). Selected international experts from various backgrounds gave presentations and engaged in discussions with the audience of more than 60 high-ranking professionals.

At the conference, the associated questions were addressed in three different sessions – the first one dealing with pertinent policy issues, the second one with suitable space traffic rules and the third one with the way to a truly global engagement. In this framework conclusions and policy recommendations on aspects related to space benefits for developing countries, the peaceful use of outer space and Space Situational Awareness were presented. The role of the UN as well as data sharing issues and Space Traffic Management were also addressed. In addition, a suitable structure for the international system was debated.

As one of the results, the conference came up with proposals for action in the form of the “10 Steps to Achieve Fair and Responsible Use of Outer Space”. Furthermore, the discussions at the conference served as a starting point for devising articles based on the contributions by the presenters and the feedback received from the audience. This book gathers these value-added articles. In addition, it features extra material such as complementary considerations and relevant information. Through this content, the book will stimulate and sustain

the debate on the crucial of question how humankind could and should use outer space in a fair and responsible manner – serving the needs of the present generation without impairing future generations’ ability to conduct space activities.

*Wolfgang Rathgeber, Kai-Uwe Schrogl, Ray A. Williamson*



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