



## INTERNATIONAL ASTRONAUTICAL FEDERATION

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#### **PLENARY 2: The development and prospects of China's space activities**

Chinese space leaders maximised the opportunity on the opening day of a major international space gathering on their own territory to promote the remarkable progress that their country's space activities have made in the past few years.

A series of top level speakers introduced delegates at the 64<sup>th</sup> International Astronautical Congress (IAF) in Beijing today (Monday, 23 September 2013) to developments in major space projects covering human spaceflight, lunar exploration, space technology and transportation, space applications and space science.

They presented and discussed China's plans for a new generation of launch vehicles, human spaceflight programme, a second imminent phase of lunar exploration, global satellite navigation and high resolution Earth observation systems.

The speakers also expressed a desire to see the development of fully fledged international cooperation, leading to a more coordinated and sustainable global space industry that would benefit everyone.

Mr Berndt Feuerbacher, past-President of the International Astronautical Federation (IAF), said that during the four years in the post he had ample opportunity to interact with the emerging space power.

He told delegates that China is a very reliable partner in space and he hoped the IAC 2013 conference would lead to strengthening relations with other countries around the world.

Mr Xu Daze, Chairman of China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC), provided an overview of China's eye-catching achievements since the launch in 1970 of the country's first self-made satellite.

CASC is a leading player involved in manned, lunar exploration, the Beidou navigation system and high resolution Earth observation, as well as carrying out research in new generation of deep space spacecraft and technology.

With the morning's successful launch of Fengyun 3C aboard a Long March 4C rocket from the Taiyuan launch base in northern China's Shanxi province, he said China had now launched a total of 232 satellites and has 105 in current operational orbits.

The new weather satellite is orbiting over Earth's poles on a three year mission to provide Chinese meteorological authorities with imagery and data for incorporation into weather forecasts.

Commenting on the Chang'e 3, China's most ambitious lunar mission yet due for launch in December, Mr Xu said that as well as a lunar rover the mission would also carry a small re-entry module to return samples to Earth.

Mr Hu Yafeng, Deputy Administrator of China National Space Administration, said major scientific and technological programmes would continue to be implemented alongside an acceleration in the construction of essential space infrastructure elements in remote sensing, communications, navigation and broadcast.

Emphasising the growing importance of international cooperation, he said China has signed 71 cooperation agreement and memoranda with space organisations in different parts of the world.

In 1988 Brazil was one of the first countries to establish a partnership with China to pursue joint space activities and Mr Jose Coelho, President of the Brazilian Space Agency, was also a guest on the panel.

"Space cooperation in the 21st century is a very powerful mechanism that should be used to strengthen and develop relationships between our countries," he said

"Since the turn of the century we have been committed to living in new stages of partnership to collectively face and overcome regional and global challenges.

"Instead of solitary satellite systems we should be building up single and common satellite systems," he added.

"Now is the time to pull things together, launching a new moment in the space age and a new chapter in human history."

Mr Gao Hongwei, Chairman of China Aerospace Science & Industry Corporation, spoke about the prospects of space technology from CASC perspective and the future possibility of a re-usable space transportation system.

"With the advantages of both aircraft and spacecraft, it would have serious commercial prospects," he said. "It is very challenging but really worth trying."

Mr Wang Zhaoyao, Director of the China Manned Space Agency, said human spaceflight embodied the great spirit of mankind to explore.

"China's break-through in this realm came in October 2003 when the first Chinese astronaut launched on Shenzhou 5 and orbited Earth 11 times.

“We have now entered a new phase - the construction of a space station which started in September 2010 and in the past three years much progress has been made,” he added.

Emphasising international cooperation, Mr Wang said that during operation and construction of space station China would continue to share the latest progress with all countries.

Mr Berndt Feuerbacher, past-President of the International Astronautical Federation (IAF), described his experiences of working with the Chinese.

“China is a very reliable partner in space and I hope this conference will help strengthen relations and understanding with other countries around the world,” he said.

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