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Space Applications: a Topic of Utmost Importance for Current and Future Space Endeavours

The **Global Space Applications Conference (GLAC) 2018**, co-organized by the **International Astronautical Federation – IAF** and the **Centro de Investigacion y Difusion Aeronautico-Espacial – CIDAE**, opened its doors on Monday 21 May 2018, in Montevideo, Uruguay. The day started with the first joint **Space Generation Advisory Council – SGAC / International Astronautical Federation – IAF Seminar** which saw the participation of worldwide students and young professionals and provided them with an opportunity to learn about capacity building and policy input on space applications.

The seminar was enriched by the participation of space experts whose enthusiasm towards the young generation was clearly notable, starting with the IAF President, **Jean-Yves Le Gall** who expressed his wish to “see more and more young people from South America engaged in space”. After an engaging and productive working groups’ session, the seminar participants gathered again for lunch where they had the privilege to listen to **Sergey Krikalev**, Executive Director of Piloted Spaceflights at ROSCOSMOS, sharing his impressive Cosmonaut career.

After a morning dedicated to the next generation, the afternoon focused on the prominent speakers attending GLAC 2018 with the Opening Ceremony and the High Level Panel on Space for Socio-Economic Growth. **Jorge Menéndez**, Minister of Defence of Uruguay addressed the audience to highlight the “utmost importance of space applications for Uruguay considering that one of its main sector of activities is agriculture”. The lack of financial resources to conduct the most basic space activities, in some countries, despite the enormous space advancements in the past decade, was one of the issues at the heart of the conversation. This is why collaboration between organisations has become vital for emerging countries to be part of the space scene in what concerns space applications. In this dynamic, **Roberto Battiston**, President of the Italian Space Agency (ASI) stressed the importance of the relationship between Latin American countries and Europe. In this spirit, ASI and IAF are working on a very important regional project, the IAF International Space Forum at Ministerial Level - ISF 2018 to take place in Buenos Aires, Argentina in fall 2018. **Pascale Ehrenfreund**, Chair of the Executive Board of the German Aerospace Centre – DLR, underlined the importance of finding the right balance between national interest and international cooperation. To mention also the participation and contributions of other Heads of Agencies, such as **Francisco Mendieta**, Director General of the Mexican Space Agency – AEM and **Valanathan Munsami**, CEO of the South African National Space Agency – SANSA.

Certainly, the first day of GLAC 2018 marked the beginning of an intense conference where the high value of space applications will hopefully embolden more and more countries, governments, space agencies and industries to work together and embrace all positive aspects and benefits of space applications.

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