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## Challenges faced by Emerging Countries at the Cornerstone of GLEC 2019

The Global Conference on Space for Emerging Countries – GLEC 2019, co-organized by the International Astronautical Federation – IAF and the Royal Center for Remote Sensing – CRTS with the support of the French Space Agency – CNES kicked-off today, Wednesday 24 April 2019 in Marrakesh, with the Opening Ceremony which set the tone for the three-day conference.

The almost 400 delegates, from more than 20 countries, were welcomed by the Moroccan Minister of Industry, Investment, Trade and Digital Economy, **Moulay Hafid Elalamy** and the Moroccan Ministry Delegate to the Head of Government in charge of the National Defence Administration, **Abdellatif Loudiyi**. Both leaders talked about the importance the government of Morocco accords to space. Minister Loudiyi spoke proudly of the last two successful launches of Mohammed 6 A and B, a *“testimony of the Moroccan King Mohammed VI’s eagerness to produce tools for space as an asset for socio-economic development”*. Continuing on that note, **Jean-Yves Le Gall**, IAF President stated that *“at a time when space activities are undergoing profound changes [...], involving emerging nations has never been more crucial”*. The Federation reconfirmed their commitment to emerging space nations when **Pascale Ehrenfreund**, IAF Vice President for Global Conferences and Incoming President, shared her *“firm intention [...] to guarantee the further development of this topical conference in future years”*.

**Driss El Hadani**, Director of the Royal Center for Remote Sensing – CRTS declared that emerging space nations *“must create their own business model to take into account their specificities and create their space programmes”*.

GLEC2019 first session touched upon the Benefits of Space Technology and Applications to Socio-Economic Development. The morning panel focused on the space agencies’ perspective featuring Heads of Agencies including **Mohammed Al Ahbabi**, UAE Space Agency (UAESA), **Rashad Nabiyeu**, Azercosmos and **Valanathan Munsami**, South African National Space Agency (SANSA). The afternoon session focused on the Industry perspective with leaders from key global space industries such as **Bruce Chesley**, The Boeing Company, **Jean-Loïc Galle**, Thales Alenia Space and **Oliver Juckenhoefel**, Airbus Defence and Space. Both session highlighted the importance of synergies between emerging and traditional space countries, in domains such as agriculture, land planning, fisheries, navigation, health and natural resources management. Emerging countries can create an attractive environment for foreign investment funds by having the government’s strong support and as stated by **Charles F. Bolden**, Former NASA Administrator, *“whatever country happens to be yours, you should look for ways to engage your government”*.

The second session of the day, moderated by **Kirsten Armstrong**, Petra Strategy, focused on financial models and resourcing. **Steve Bochinger**, Euroconsult, reminded the delegates that *“there is no funding model that fits all; it always depends on the specific national context, type of programme and objectives pursued”*. **Talal Al Kaissi**, UAE Space Agency (UAESA), explained why the UAE invests in space: both to diversify the economy and to inspire the youth.

Looking at the future of Global Conferences, the IAF and its member, State Space Corporation Roscosmos, represented by **Sergey Saveliev**, announced and signed the MoA for the upcoming Global Space Exploration Conference – GLEX 2020 to take place in June 2020 in St Petersburg, Russia.

