

# International Space Forum – The Mediterranean Chapter

Reggio Calabria, 5 September 2019

## Statement of COSPAR

Good afternoon,

Ministers,  
Local Authorities,  
Heads of Delegations,  
IAF President and Executive Director,  
ASI President, Industry Representative,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor and a special pleasure to be here in Reggio Calabria at the **International Space Forum – The Mediterranean Chapter** - dedicated to *“Space technology and applications meet Mediterranean needs”*.

COSPAR, the Committee on Space Research, comprising more than 10,000 associates, mainly scientists active in space research, as well as industrialists, has the objective to promote on an international level scientific research in space, with emphasis on the exchange of results, information and opinions, and to provide a forum, open to all scientists, for the discussion of problems that may affect scientific space research.

COSPAR is then particularly committed to improve the scientific environment and impact of the **Mediterranean Countries** and clearly resonates with this Forum discussion and the interests of the Mediterranean Chapter.

Yesterday, thanks to the possibility to visit the “Museo Archeologico di Calabria” we have seen the exquisite reminiscence of the top artists, actually anatomists, that were able, 2500 years ago to imagine the

astonishing athletic bodies of the two “Bronzi di Riace”. Perfect muscles that Leonardo, Michelangelo and other sculptors were able to reproduce in marble artefacts only 2000 years later. In fact, these unknown anatomists, or body-artists if you wish, would have not been able to produce these incredible statues without the leading-edge technology available at that time: metal fusion technique, use of copper, iron, silver, gold mixed together, etc. We still do not know how they managed, yet we should learn from their efforts: our most talented scientists should imagine future space missions that will enable us to better understand the evolution of the universe by means of space observatories, manned and robotics missions, and finally decipher the evolution of life that resulted in our civilization.

Many examples can be made: recently we detected the gravity waves emitted by neutron stars coalescing together, measuring minuscule space-time variations, 100 years after Einstein imagined a completely new Universe, and in real time we detected with the INTEGRAL and FERMI satellites the origin of the gravity waves and, in turn, heavy metal production: gold, europium etc.

Europe, the US, and Japan are designing the largest ever planned X-Ray space observatory, ATHENA, with cryogenics detectors cooled to a fraction of a Kelvin degree, to observe the edge of the Universe and finally understand its birth and evolution.

**COSPAR** and the **IAF** have now a similar role to that of the people that produced the “Bronzi di Riace”: younger scientists are designing future space experiments that need cutting edge technologies, conceived by scientific institutions, and then developed and implemented by space industries in the following decades.

**COSPAR** and the **IAF**, along with other international institutions, need to work in synergy to foster and boost space science and technology and in turn to give space industry a chance to develop technologies and tools, in the next 10-20 years, for a better day-by-day life: **The Space Economy is already started.**

Finally, I wish to mention that COSPAR has engaged into a strategic effort to enhance its influence and impact, aiming at revamping its relationship with **the younger generation and with industry** and extending its scope to the social sciences, through the formation of two new Panels – on **Innovative Solutions and on Social sciences and Humanities** respectively – and the renewal of its categories of Associated Supporters.

COSPAR is also pursuing efforts in realigning its communication – a new web site, a new electronic bulletin you will soon receive, increased presence on social networks, closer links to journalists and media, new book series, etc.

Regarding the Mediterranean aspect, I wish also to highlight the upcoming **4th COSPAR Symposium on “Small satellites for sustainable Science and Development”**, and **Capacity Building Workshop** to be held in November in Herzliya (Israel), including a Space Agencies roundtable, the **2022 General Assembly in Athens**, the recent membership of Cyprus, and the Capacity Building program which is open to countries in the Mediterranean region.

Thank you for your kind attention