



## INTERNATIONAL ASTRONAUTICAL FEDERATION

### NEWS ITEM 09/23/2013 IAC 2013 SETS NEW RECORD

**A new record attendance was announced when the 64<sup>th</sup> International Astronautical Congress (IAC) opened in Beijing, China, this morning (Monday, 23 September 2013).**

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Li Yuanchao, Vice-President of the People's Republic of China, described the Congress as an Olympic-class event for the worldwide aerospace community. He revealed that 74 countries were represented among the 3,359 registered delegates, making it a truly international gathering and the largest of its kind in the history of the IAC.

Mr Yuanchao said peace should always be at the top of the agenda in mankind's quest to explore the universe and he warned it would be a disaster if space was ever used for war. "Mankind faces many challenges for which space can help and China is ready to join the international community to exploit space for the benefit of all," he stated.

He told delegates that bringing together the international space community was becoming ever more important as space became a truly global enterprise.

The Opening Ceremony also saw the presentation of two prestigious awards - the World Space Award to Dr Edward Stone, in recognition of his work on the Voyager space probes and many of NASA's unmanned planetary exploration programmes, and the Allan D Emil Memorial Award to Dr Ma Xingrui for his foundational work in the Chinese space programme over three decades .

The main auditorium at the China National Congress Centre (CNCC), the venue of the week-long IAC, was full to capacity for the opening ceremony which concluded with a series of Chinese cultural presentations.

With keynote speakers from most of the world's space organisations and companies, the Congress technical programme features a record-breaking number of symposia with a series of keynote Plenary lectures underscoring the theme of 'Promoting Space Development for the Benefit of Mankind'.

A Space Exhibition featuring nearly 80 organisations from six continents, including national space agencies and specialised technology firms, also opened at the Congress venue today.

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