

IAF SPACE SECURITY COMMITTEE

1. Introduction

Space security has become one of the key topics in any discussion concerning space. The need to strengthen long-term sustainability, safety and security in space is shared by all nations. It is in the collective interest of all peaceful space-faring or space-using nations to encourage the responsible use of space and minimize orbital debris, in order to protect any in-orbit manoeuvring spacecraft from risk of collision and to preserve the space environment.

At the same time, the peaceful use of Outer space, which prevailed in the past, is not to be taken for granted; we are facing a change of paradigm with a contested and conflicting space domain. Today, close approach and proximity operations by foreign objects of satellite-inspection class are already a reality.

We acknowledge the apparition of newcomers and the diversification of space actors, the arrival of large constellations and the multiplication of small satellites, leading to a growing complexity of space operations. There are also moves towards active debris removal (ADR), on-orbit servicing (OOS), rendezvous and proximity operations (RPO), which can be perceived as dual use technologies. This combination of factors and trends brings many opportunities but it also means increasing risks of collisions and interferences, as space will become more and more dense and congested.

In this fast-changing environment, with an increase in both the risks and threats in space, the question of Space Situational Awareness and Space Traffic Management is of the utmost importance. Today, and in the future, we will need to be able to detect, identify, characterize, understand, analyze, attribute and verify what is happening in outer space. An awareness of the highly dynamic and increasingly complex near-Earth space environment appears to be essential to safeguarding

space-based assets, ensuring access to space and contributing to the safety, security and sustainability of space in the long run.

The Space Security Committee focuses on a wide spectrum of topics concerned with security, safety and sustainability. More than a technical committee, the Space Security Committee is a high-level policy and strategy Committee welcoming highly distinguished speakers, and fascinating experts as well as researchers from around the globe. From national to international bodies and through multi-actors, the Space Security Committee offers a 360 degrees range of topics and discussions enlightening the space security community as well as the public to a topic that concerns us all.

2. Latest Developments

Thanks to its high-level members and distinguished speakers, the Space Security Committee was able to hear from Geneva through the Open-Ended Working Group on reducing space threats, rules and principles of responsible behaviors, and explore Space Security Challenges and STM Implications through Privateer.

Themes that were approached and discussed by the Committee this Spring included Space Traffic management, rules and principles of responsible behaviors, space sustainability and security.

Indeed, during our Spring Meeting, **Ambassador Hellmut Lagos Koller**, Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats and shared with us the results of the 3rd Session that took place just a month before the Space Security Committee Meeting. So far, the WG process has succeeded in generating a more open and innovative discussion about a complex topic, avoiding a descent into the irreconcilable, binary arguments of traditional multilateral discussions. The chair highlighted that

if all delegations appreciate this unique diplomatic opportunity to finally make progress on this issue, and the group manages to continue to work responsibly in the fulfilment of its mandate, there is a real chance to achieve that difficult consensus.

We had the pleasure to listen to **Moriba Jah** from The University of Texas at Austin, Aerospace Engineering and Engineering Mechanics Department: Privateer in order to discuss Space Security Challenges and STM Implications. **Joseph Landon** from the “Sustainability, Investment, and Security” (SIS) IAF Taskforce shared with the Committee Meeting the objectives and themes of the SIS Agenda.

3. Breakthroughs

The European Union Space Strategy for Security and Defence was definitely the most exciting breakthrough in the field of Security this year and was published just a couple of weeks before our meeting. We will in fact be delighted to hear more about the Strategy during our IAC Meeting next September and look more closely at its implementation plan.

4. Action plan for the year

The main focus of the Space Security Committee for the Second part of the year will truly be **Space Economy, Space Security and Space Sustainability**. The Space Security Committee is looking forward to collaborating closely with the SIS taskforce and strives to promote these themes, particularly security and sustainability through its discussions and activities. We will also give significant importance to discussions around the European Union Space Strategy for Security and Defence as well as the newly published 2023 Global Counterspace Capabilities Report by Secure World Foundation.

The Space Security Committee will continue to invite and share its knowledge with high-level experts and researchers in the field of Space Security, encompassing both, national and international bodies as well as multi actors. Continuing the study of the risk level update of space threat, and organizing sessions promoting the submission of our topics.