

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

From the Vatican to the Global Space Community: ISF 2026 Advances the Dialogue on Space for Peace

Pope Leo XIV welcomes IAF and ASI delegations to the Vatican ahead of the 8th International Space Forum bringing global space decision makers together under the theme "The Gate to Sky: Space for Peace".

Rome, Italy, 25 November 2026 – The International Space Forum (ISF) 2026 – The Roman Chapter – took place on 23 November 2026 at the historic Palazzo della Cancelleria in Rome, marking a significant milestone: ten years since the Forum's first edition in Trento in 2016 and a decade of cooperation between the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) and the Italian Space Agency (ASI).

The Forum was preceded by a special moment at the Vatican on Saturday, 21 November, when His Holiness Pope Leo XIV received the IAF President Gabriella Arrigo, IAF and ASI delegations in a private audience and sent his special message to the global space people.



"I appreciate the choice of the Vatican as the venue for this year's Forum, which is dedicated to the urgent need to safeguard outer space from any kind of use or exploration for non-peaceful purposes. I fully share this concern and hope that your voice will receive the attention it deserves in political and legislative forums", - Pope Leo XIV to the IAF international community.

Under the theme "The Gate to Sky: Space for Peace", this year's International Space Forum (ISF) placed the role of space as a driver of peace, international cooperation and shared progress at the centre of its discussions. Bringing together over 140 delegates from 41 countries and 15 intergovernmental organizations, The Forum addressed pressing issues concerning the contribution of space activities to the well-being of humanity and the health of our planet, the importance of



effective governance, greater awareness and shared responsibility in ensuring the sustainable and peaceful use of outer space.

"Over the past ten years, the International Space Forum has evolved from an initiative giving emerging space nations a stronger voice into a global platform for inclusive dialogue, international cooperation and capacity-building. From Trento to Rome, this anniversary edition celebrates a decade of cooperation while looking ahead to the Forum's next chapter", – Gabriella Arrigo, IAF President.



H.E. Ambassador Mario Cospito, Extraordinary Commissioner of the Italian Space Agency (ASI), was also honoured with an award from the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) for Peace on Earth and in Space, in recognition of the longstanding and fruitful cooperation between ASI and the IAF, and their shared commitment to fostering international collaboration in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

As the global space landscape continues to evolve, the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) through the Forum and other global events calls for strengthened multilateral cooperation, responsible conduct and a shared commitment to preserving outer space as a domain dedicated to peaceful purposes and serving the interests of all nations.

#ISF2026
#IAFASTRO

Watch the full video of Pope Leo XIV's message to the IAF community here.
Media Contact: media@iafastro.org



About the International Astronautical Federation (IAF)

INTERNATIONAL ASTRONAUTICAL FEDERATION

Founded in 1951, the **International Astronautical Federation (IAF)** is the world's leading space advocacy body with more than **621 members from 84 countries**, including all leading space agencies, industries, research institutions, universities, societies, associations, institutes and museums worldwide. Following its motto *"Connecting @ll Space People"* and its vision of *"A space-faring world cooperating for the benefit of humanity"*, the Federation advances knowledge about space, supporting the development and application of space assets by promoting global cooperation. As organizer of the annual International Astronautical Congress (IAC) – world's premier global space event – and other thematic IAF Global Conferences, the IAF actively encourages the development of space activities for peaceful purposes and supports the dissemination of scientific and technical information related to space.

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