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Space Generation Forum: visions and perspectives of youth

I. Procedures

1. In December 1997, the Secretariat invited the International Space University to organize a youth forum as part of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III).
2. The 160 participants of the Space Generation Forum were from 60 nations. Their expertise covered all fields of space, including science, technology, law, ethics, art, literature, anthropology and architecture, and many other fields relevant to space.
3. The participants of the Space Generation Forum were encouraged from the beginning to think in terms of a broader perspective, encompassing all humanity, and to disregard national agendas. All participants spoke only as concerned individuals, guided by their conscience and a belief in the power of space to change humanity in positive ways.
4. The discussions of the Space Generation Forum resulted in 49 recommendations (A/CONF.184/L.8, annex). On 23 July, the participants were asked to choose the 10 best recommendations. Consensus was achieved concerning the selection of the 10 recommendations.

II. Guiding vision

5. It was noted that the cosmos naturally inspired wonder and curiosity. Throughout history, space had provided humanity with both fertile soil for the imagination and practical benefits for daily use. In ancient times, people had learned to navigate ships, plant crops and determine the seasons by observing objects in the night sky. In the twentieth century, people had developed the ability to go into space and had even visited some of those objects which had once guided their way.
6. It was noted that the combination of human ingenuity and the rich province of space had yielded benefits that had not been possible to imagine only 100 years ago. Although what lay ahead was unknown, the more important question was "In what manner will the space millennium unfold?".
7. The participants of the Space Generation Forum expressed the hope and the conviction that the common future of persons living on Earth ought to proceed ethically, with an understanding of the long-term consequences of their action, and with all peoples walking forward together as one.

III. Recommendations

8. The participants of the Space Generation Forum agreed on the following recommendations:

Universal space education

1. An appeal should be made to the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to develop a space education curriculum, to be implemented by Member States in their education curricula. The dissemination of resources and knowledge should be a cooperative effort to improve literacy involving Governments, corporations and non-governmental organizations at the national and international levels.
2. A Space Prize, having the equivalent status of the Nobel Prize, should be awarded in recognition of outstanding achievement in the area of peaceful applications of outer space for the benefit of society, in order:
 - (a) To advocate the peaceful uses of outer space;
 - (b) To increase awareness of achievements made towards bringing outer space closer to society;
 - (c) To promote international cooperation through professional interaction.

Meeting basic needs from an ethical standpoint

3. The United Nations and mobile satellite communication operators should work together to establish a memorandum of understanding on priority access to mobile satellite communication networks during disasters and emergencies.
4. Given the many programmes throughout the world aimed at providing developing countries with useful space technologies, there should be a programme for promoting the implementation of those technologies, taking into account cultural and ecological differences, in exchange for the discontinuation of activities harmful to the Earth.

Cooperation among nations

5. An international space authority should be constituted to make possible:
 - (a) Oversight and enforcement of a balanced regulation of the multiple interests in space;
 - (b) Access for all peoples to the material benefits and knowledge and understanding resulting from the exploration and use of space resources;
 - (c) The pooling of resources of nations and industries for the creation of space infrastructure, missions and enterprises for the optimal development of large-scale space endeavours.
6. An international entity should be created, charged with maximizing the economic value of all space activities by facilitating long-term

investments to accelerate space exploration and development, bringing the full benefits of space technology to all nations and promoting public awareness worldwide.

An enduring human presence on Earth and in space

7. An appeal should be made to the United Nations to recognize the hazards and dangers in outer space that threaten the Earth and to take adequate, proactive measures to mitigate or prevent the risks involved.

8. An international centre for space medicine should be established to provide a sound basis for the development, promotion and application of state-of-the-art space medicine for the benefit of humanity on Earth and in space.

Maintaining accountability with regard to the objectives

9. Given that young people have a responsibility to take an active role in the promotion and development of space, it is recommended that a youth advisory council be established as part of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

10. The Space Generation Forum should be held every five years, with an annual follow-up meeting. The link with the International Space University should be maintained, and the annual follow-up meeting should be held in parallel with the annual conference of the International Astronautical Federation.
