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High Level Academic Panel

As part of the Space Generation Forum a High-Level Academic Panel was held on 19 July. The participating panel members were: Dr. Yash Pal, Professor Halton Arp, Professor Vittorio Canuto, Professor Margaret Burbidge and Professor Ben Finney.

Professor Canuto opened with a statement concerning space evolution and the philosophy of Socrates. He said there had been historic revolutions 10,000 and 200 years ago and that now is the time for a new revolution in space science. "The key is Knowledge based on education. There is a need for an adequate system of education that meets the needs of the new millennium and is of benefit for all mankind."

Professor Finney said that like the Russian scientist Tsiolkovsky, who foresaw settlements in space and developed the equation which set the basis for modern space exploration, there is a second era coming which will not be for war or commerce. It will be for human welfare and the settlement of space.

Professor Arp said that the discovery of quasars that do not correspond to expected findings has overthrown previous theories regarding the evolution of space. He went on to say that some of these findings have been discovered by amateur scientists. Having understood this, there is a need to make astronomical data available to scientists and also for more effective means of allocating observatory equipment.

Professor Arp finished by making four recommendations,

- 1) Independent researchers should be supported.
- 2) Observation facilities should be available to a greater number of people.
- 3) Internet communication between those in the field should be established.
- 4) There should be a more democratic way of deciding which findings should be published.

Professor Burbidge said that the challenge is to find a way of observing electromagnetic radiation without interference. She added that due to technological advances there is a tendency for scientists to follow similar research paths. She referred to this as 'Big Bang

Dr. Yash Pal said observing space from earth is a difficult task due to interference and various sorts of pollution. He said that new technology has made observation from space possible. He added that the quest for knowledge, connected with the diversity of specializations amongst space scientists, has led to bigotry. He finished by calling for a need to develop greater awareness in the way scientists act and think.

Concluding the event, Nandasiri Jasentulyiana, Executive Secretary of UNISPACE III, thanked the panel and said he hoped the event had been inspiring for everyone. He added that he also hoped that we would do tomorrow that which is impossible today.

The Space Generation Forum is a forum for young space professionals organized by the alumni of the International Space University with the aim to express the visions and perspectives of the youth with regards to future space activities. The Space Generation Forum is attended by over 160 participants from more than 60 nations.

Points of contact:

Mr. Norbert Frischauf
Mobile: 0676 46 42 450

Mr. Lance Bush
Mobile: 0664 565 28 46

Email: info@space-generation.org