

Press Release

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“The African Chapter” IAF and the international space community supporting space science and academia for sustainable development in Africa

Tuesday 13 February in Nairobi, CNES and IAF President Jean-Yves Le Gall opened “The African Chapter” of the second International Space Forum (ISF), organized by the International Astronautical Federation (IAF), the Kenyan Space Agency (KSA) and the Italian space agency ASI on the theme of space science and academia for sustainable development in Africa.

The first edition of ISF organized in October 2016 in Trento, Italy, encouraged a global discussion on the need to promote greater involvement of universities and national academies in the conception, execution and exploitation of peaceful space programmes. This resulted in the adoption of the Trento Space Statement, marking the starting point on the path towards accomplishing the goals of ISF, this second edition of which has now added “The African Page”, endorsed by all delegations present.

Space science and education are supporting Africa’s socio-economic development and there is a real commitment to get academia more involved in shaping space policies in response to the global challenges facing Africa, be it in protecting the environment, monitoring climate change, developing higher education, eliminating gender disparities or ensuring peace and security and managing natural resources. At a time of unprecedented transition for the space sector, new challenges and new exciting opportunities lie ahead. IAF, as the principal international space advocacy body, is playing a pivotal role in assisting its members worldwide, analysing the implications and understanding this transition.

During his opening address, Jean-Yves Le Gall stated: “Seeing such regional diversity here today at this second edition of ISF shows that we all share common goals. We have to work together within the international space community by involving not only space agencies but also industries and academia to achieve our goals. The adoption of ‘The African Page’ marks another step towards accomplishing ISF’s goals and the space sector is increasingly instrumental in the socio-economic transformations we are seeing today.” He also announced that at the invitation of His Excellency Mohammed VI, King of Morocco, IAF has started work on organizing a global conference on space for emerging countries in Morocco in 2019.

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