

PSSI SPACE SECURITY ROUNDTABLE — APRIL 22, 2021 (15:00–17:00 CET)

STRATEGIC COMPETITION FOR INTERNATIONAL SPACE PARTNERSHIPS AND KEY PRINCIPLES FOR A SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL SPACE ECONOMY

VENUE: ONLINE (CISCO WEBEX PLATFORM)

PROCEEDINGS:

15:00–15:05 INTRODUCTION AND SETTING FORTH ROUNDTABLE OBJECTIVES

Dr. Jana Robinson, Managing Director and Space Security Program Director, PSSI

A great power competition is already well underway and the leader/winner will likely accrue adequate leverage to shape the space domain according to their strategic vision and value system. PSSI has been at the forefront of supporting the transatlantic allies and their partners in strengthening the global acceptance of disciplined, open, fair, and transparent principles to govern this domain. It has also written extensively on the necessity of responding firmly and persuasively, especially in the economic and financial domain, to space-related transgressions. Some questions to help shape this roundtable are as follows:

What key principles should guide international space cooperation, partnerships and fair commerce?

What is at stake for the allies with regard to the reality that the state-led, non-market economic and financial practices employed by China and Russia have made steady and significant gains in international markets and, between them, have forged partnerships with the space sectors of some 90 countries?

What approaches, measures and response options should be adopted to ensure that our values and principles form the foundation of a sustainable global space economy over the long haul?

15:05–15:20 KEYNOTE ADDRESS:

Heidi Grant, Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency

15:20–16:05

**SESSION ONE:
ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL THREATS TO STABLE INTERNATIONAL
SPACE PARTNERSHIPS**

Moderator: **Dr. Jana Robinson,** Managing Director and Space Security Program Director, PSSI
Speakers: **Kevin O’Connell,** CEO, Space Economy Rising, LLC, and former Director of the Office of
Space Commerce, U.S. Department of Commerce
Dr. Scott Pace, Director, Space Policy Institute, George Washington University and former
Executive Secretary of the U.S. National Space Council
Augusto Gonzalez, Adviser for EU Space Diplomacy, DG for Defence Industry and Space (DG
DEFIS), European Commission

This session will discuss the international economic and financial (E&F) space activities of China and Russia. These largely overlooked E&F elements of their “ground game” urgently need to be addressed, particularly given the scores of foreign governments that have come under the sway of China and/or Russia. The knowing creation of undue space-related dependencies also represents a threat to the development of a sustainable global space economy.

Some of these worrying E&F activities include: non-market, subsidized loan arrangements; damaging fair competition in the space sub-sectors due to a government’s intervention on behalf of its enterprises; compromising the sovereignty of countries via financial indebtedness and the resulting seizure of assets; and insisting on sole source contracts for much of a country’s space sector development, potentially leading to what PSSI terms “space sector capture”. Developing, often cash-strapped, countries are most vulnerable to such aggressive marketing approaches and only discover the downside implications too late. Democratic countries are also not immune to these E&F predations, although often couched in seemingly benign individual commercial contracts, scientific collaboration, academic exchanges, or broader funding commitments beyond the space sector.

This session will also discuss the broader implications of skewed international space partnerships, mainly the expansion of the Chinese and Russian global space footprints (including shaping of global space norms and standards) and the shrinkage of future markets for the equipment, technologies, and services of Western commercial space companies.

On the matter of competitive commercial pressures, it should be noted that Chinese and Russian space enterprises -- including those that are publicly traded and whose securities are held widely in Western capital markets -- are often already subject to US and/or other official sanctions and have regularly engaged in corporate national security and human rights abuses that have not been properly disclosed or penalized.

16:05–16:50

SESSION TWO: ESTABLISHING KEY PRINCIPLES FOR A SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL SPACE ECONOMY

Moderator: **Dr. John P. Stopher**, Senior Fellow, PSSI

Speakers: **Jonathan Moore**, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Oceans and International Environment and Scientific Affairs, United States Department of State
Kay Sears, Vice President and General Manager for Military Space, Lockheed Martin
Dr. Jill Stuart, Visiting Fellow, Department of Government, The London School of Economics and Political Science

The Transatlantic allies and their partners need to leverage cross-domain actions to achieve an effective, comprehensive strategy. This session will discuss possible modalities to keep in check the growing space-derived influence of China and Russia. It will not be an easy task, due, in part, to the abundance of opportunities that China and Russia have to utilize unfair practices in the economic and financial sphere (e.g., financial subsidies, non-disclosure, lack of discipline and regulatory safeguards, and other non-market behavior), not to mention outright corruption. There are, however, measures that can be taken by the U.S. and its allies to help mitigate these types of existing and future risks; improve the competitive playing field for Western space companies and create barriers to space commerce that violates the global system of free and fair trade.

16:50–17:00

CLOSING REMARKS