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Space Debate opens with call to tackle debris collision risk

UAE's rapid progress in space sector comes in for high praise

ABU DHABI

BY SAMIHAH ZAMAN

The Abu Dhabi Space De-bate kicked off in the capital, yesterday, with world leaders and top officials heaping praise on the UAE's rapid progress and ambitions within the sector. Highlighting the need for

greater collaboration among space agencies, governments and private sector players, Sarah Al Amiri, UAE Minister of State for Public Education and Advanced Technology, chairwoman of the UAE Space Agency, and chairwoman of the Higher Committee of the Abu Dhabi Space Debate, highlighted how the latest international space treaty is more than is 55 years old.

"[Space] is no longer a bi-polar area with a space race, but a multilateral sector with 70 nations being considered space capable, a fast-growing private sector taking on an expanding role, and global tensions threatening some of the greatest aspects of the field. Yet our most important piece of international legislation, the Outer Space Treaty, dates back to 1967," Al Amiri said. Al Amiri said the world

needs to act now on the issue of space debris, and to use the findings of space research to tackle pressing climate con-

Valuable contribution

"There is no global forum where regulators, governments, space commands, militaries, private sectors and academics can meet to take a holistic view of the development of this vital sector. This is where we believe the Abu Dhabi Space Debate has a key and valuable contribution to make in order to further de-fine this development," Al Amiri added.

The conference was officially inaugurated by Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and Sheikh Khaled bin Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, member of the Executive Council and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Office, Israeli President Isaac Herzog, and Dr Jitendra Sin-



gh, Indian Minister of State for Space, Science and Tech-

Speaking to attendees, a number of space experts highlighted the importance of space research and technol-ogy to combat climate change and advance medicine. The debate also highlighted the presence of 30,000 pieces of space debris orbiting the earth, despite the existence of 77 government space agencies and numerous private sector players.

Herzog and Dr Singh also praised the UAE's space am-bitions and plans, and expressed hopes for greater col-laboration with Emirati space missions and projects.

Israel collaboration

Herzog said: "I am esperially proud of our evolving space partnership with the UAE. Our countries are boldly leading the region to new frontiers in space and leaving our mark on history. Look no further for an investigation or the control of the control further for an inspiring exam-ple than the Venus satellite, a joint Israeli-French project that is now proving for joint Israeli-Emirati research. The Venus satellite has been

closely circling Earth, monitoring vegetation, forests, cropland, nature reserves and beaming back multi-spectral images. In their first joint venture, the Israeli and Emirati space agencies are now funding a joint analy-sis of this data by Israeli and Emirati scientists, which will help us better understand our global environment and col-laborate on better solutions to protect our planet's green

lungs."
"It is critical that we deepen and extend such transnational collaborations for the benefit of our planet and our

region.

"As we look forward to COP28, which will be held in the UAE in a few months, we must work together to harness the power of advanced space technologies and ad-dress the urgent climate crisis in the Middle East and the Mediterranean. Our cooperation can turn our beautiful region into a global hub of climate solutions, and I believe the UAE, Israel and India can lead the way."