

Statement by the South African Council for Space Affairs on its achievements for 2011

15 December 2011

Established in terms of the Space Affairs Act (No 84 of 1993), the South African Council for Space Affairs (SACSA) provides the legal framework for matters pertaining to outer space activities in South Africa. SACSA is established under the authority of the Minister of Trade and Industry to exercise regulatory functions and advise the Minister on all space-related matters, license all South African space objects and launching activities and take care of South Africa's interests, responsibilities and obligations in compliance with international agreements ratified by the Republic. SACSA is also responsible for overseeing the implementation of the National Space Policy, which is an over-arching framework that provides implementation guidelines to all public and private space stakeholders in South Africa, on how they should conduct space-related activities in a coordinated manner. The National Space Programme and any space activities undertaken by public or private sector entities are thus subject to the Space Affairs Act, which regulates all space activities in South Africa under the authority of the Minister of Trade and Industry. The chairperson of SACSA is Dr Peter Martinez.

SACSA's achievements for 2011 include the following:

- **Minister approved Strategic Plan.** The Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr Rob Davies, approved SACSA's three-year Strategic Plan in July 2011. In his remarks after receiving SACSA's strategic plan, Minister Davies said, "Space technology has important societal benefits. As such, it is important for us to be fully engaged with this technology and not only to be passive users that rely on other countries for access to satellite data and satellite time." He said he would rely on SACSA to provide him with advice on measures to promote the domestic space industry.
- **Air, Space and Telecommunications Law course offered.** SACSA co-hosted with the University of Pretoria a course on Air, Space and Telecommunications Law, which was presented by well-known space law academic Professor Stephan Hobe of Germany. The course will also be offered in February 2012.
- **Participation in United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS).** SACSA is responsible for coordinating South Africa's participation in the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the inter-governmental body that develops and codifies international space law. Four SACSA Councillors participated in the 50th anniversary commemoration of human space flight in Vienna, Austria. Council members were also part of the South African delegation to the 54th Session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS), 1-10 June 2011, Vienna, Austria. Ms Nomfuneko Majaja, the vice-chairperson of SACSA, served as one of the vice-presidents of the 54th Session of UNCOPUOS. Dr Peter Martinez, Chairperson of SACSA chairs the UNCOPUOS Working Group on

the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities. This Working Group adopted its Terms of Reference at the 54th session of UNCOPUOS.

- **Participation in the 62nd International Astronomical Congress (IAC).** SACSA exhibited at the 62nd International Astronomical Congress (IAC) of the International Astronomical Federation (IAF) in Cape Town in October 2011. Dr Peter Martinez, SACSA's chairperson and the head of the local organising committee of the 62nd IAC, received international recognition for his work in space affairs. Dr Martinez was awarded the Yangel Medal, along with 12 other high-ranking space officials in the world. Dr Martinez was also elected to the International Academy of Astronautics. Several members of SACSA presented academic papers at the IAC.
- **Launch of National Registry of Objects launched into Outer Space.** In terms of international space legislation, each country that launches or procures the launching of a space object is required to maintain a national registry of its space objects. For this reason, SACSA developed a National Registry of Objects Launched into Outer Space, which was launched by Minister Rob Davies in July 2011. See the table below for these objects.

International designator	Name	Launch Date	Apogee (km)	Perigee (km)	Inclination (degrees)	Period (minutes)	Function
1999-008C	SUNSAT	23/02/1999	852	642	96.45	99.75	Earth Observation with additional experimental payloads.
2009-049F	SUMBANDILA	17/09/2009	504	503	97.28	94.68	Earth observation with additional experimental payloads.

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