



A Report on Participation at the 37th Space Symposium

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Overview

The 37th Space Symposium was held at Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs, U.S. for four days from April 4 (Mon.) to 7 (Thu.), 2022. This symposium is usually held in the first week of April every year; however, last year, it was held in August due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and this resulted in fewer attendees from all fields. But this year’s event saw more than 10,000 participants, with the symposium itself being centered on local participation. Many Japanese government officials (including from the Ministry of Defense), officials from JAXA, and officials from Japan's private sector also participated.

Overall impressions and analysis

This symposium was originally started in 1984 in Colorado Springs, which is known as a hotspot for the U.S. Air Force, with the aim of making the Air Force's activities more widely known. Now, boasting more than 10,000 participants, it has become the largest space-related symposium in the U.S., despite in the beginning acting simply as a place where small numbers of space enthusiasts congregated together. The fact that the first speaker was the U.S. Space Force commander made this year's event a great opportunity to understand the direction in which the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force are heading.

In addition to that, this year's symposium occurred immediately after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, on February 24. Inevitably, the topics of discussion strayed into Russia, the influence of this development, and how things would proceed in the future. Of course, there has always been talk of threats from China and North Korea, but I got the impression that the Ukraine problem was massive and complicated. In the field of space, and in terms of the International Space Station (ISS), generally Space Agency want to cooperate with Russia, but considering current situation, it seemed like nobody wanted to touch on the current topic amid a military conflict that was expanding more than had been expected. On the other hand, due to the effects of sanctions on Russia, launching with Russia has become difficult for the time being, so launches by ULA, SpaceX, and ArianeSpace will be significantly increased, and I got the impression that all of this constituted a very uncommon situation.

Main discussions



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At the exhibitions/venue



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