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SPEAKER BIOS

Skyward Africa Space Salon

The Skyward Africa Space Salon brings together policymakers, researchers, industry leaders, and diaspora innovators shaping Africa's role in the global space ecosystem. The speakers represent expertise across space policy, international cooperation, security, and emerging technology.

Amber McIntyre



Senior Director of Civil Space at the Aerospace Industries Association (AIA)

Amber McIntyre is a space policy and industry professional whose work focuses on international collaboration, commercial space development, and emerging space markets. She has experience working at the intersection of government policy, private sector innovation, and global space partnerships. Her work explores how emerging space economies—particularly across Africa and other developing regions—can participate in the expanding global space industry through strategic partnerships, investment, and technology development.

Meshack Kinyua Ndiritu



**Space Applications Training Officer, African Space Agency
Atlantic Council Nonresident Senior Fellow [GeoTech Center](#)
CEO, AfriOrbit**

Meshack Kinyua Ndiritu is a technology and space-sector professional focused on satellite infrastructure, space-enabled services, and emerging space ecosystems across Africa. His work highlights how satellite technology can support economic development, connectivity, environmental monitoring, and security across the continent. He contributes to conversations on how Africa can expand its participation in the global space economy through innovation, workforce development, and international collaboration.

Rama Afullo



CEO, Satlyt

Rama Afullo works at the intersection of technology, innovation ecosystems, and international collaboration. His work focuses on expanding access to advanced technologies—including space and satellite systems—to support economic development and digital infrastructure across Africa. Afullo has contributed to discussions on how emerging technologies, policy frameworks, and global partnerships can accelerate Africa's role in the future space economy.

Maureen Farrell

Nonresident Senior Fellow, GeoStrategy Initiative – Atlantic Council
Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs
Vice President, Valar



Maureen Farrell is a national security and Africa policy expert with more than twenty-five years of experience across the U.S. government, think tanks, and the private sector. She currently serves as a nonresident senior fellow with the GeoStrategy Initiative at the Atlantic Council's Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security and works in the private sector on global partnership initiatives. Most recently, Farrell served as the U.S. Department of Defense's Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs, where she oversaw defense policy and strategy for the African continent. She previously held senior roles on the U.S. National Security Council staff coordinating defense, security, and digital policy for Africa, and earlier worked at the U.S. Department of State managing security assistance and governance programs. Farrell holds a Master of Science in National Security Strategy from the National War College, a Master of Arts in Security Studies from Georgetown University, and bachelor's degrees in Anthropology and African Studies from Northwestern University.

Matt Petit

Mission Lead for Economic Security, Vannevar Labs

Mr. Matt Petit is a Mission Lead with Vannevar Labs, a U.S.-based national security technology company. Prior to joining Vannevar, Matt was a U.S. diplomat for nearly 17 years. His overseas assignments included as Iran Watcher in Yerevan, Armenia; Deputy Political/Economic Chief in Lusaka, Zambia; and Vice Consul in Chennai, India. In Washington, Mr. Petit served separately on country desks covering Somalia, Eritrea/Djibouti, and Sudan and led a 12-person team developing regional counterterrorism policy toward Africa, Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Mr. Petit served as Director for African Affairs at the White House National Security Council from 2022 to 2023, covering the Sahel region. Mr. Petit graduated from Davidson College in North Carolina with degrees in political science and music.



Both Farrell and Petit served together as directors for Africa at the US National Security Council.

About the Skyward Africa Space Salon

The **Skyward Africa Space Salon** convenes policymakers, industry leaders, researchers, and diaspora innovators to explore Africa's expanding role in the global space economy. The event examines topics including:

- Space diplomacy and international cooperation
- Commercial opportunities in Africa's space sector
- National security and space policy
- The role of African diaspora talent in the global space ecosystem

Date: March 26, 2026 **Location:** Washington, DC | Hosted by **Skyward Africa**, an initiative of **Asha Strategies**.

To register visit bit.ly/SpaceSalon26 For more information contact info@skywardafrica.com