

RESOLUTION ON THE EUROPEAN SPACE POLICY

THE COUNCIL

HAVING REGARD to the Framework Agreement between the European Community and the European Space Agency, entered into force in May 2004 and the increasing cooperation between the two parties,

RECALLING the orientations of the "Space Council" meetings of 25 November 2004, 7 June 2005 and 28 November 2005,

RECALLING the decisions of the ESA Council at Ministerial level in 2005 and the adoption of the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme in 2006, implying a long-term commitment to support the development of the GMES space component and for GMES data access,

HAVING REGARD to the United Nations Outer Space Treaty framework,

I Vision for Europe and General Strategy

HIGHLIGHTING that the space sector is a strategic asset contributing to the independence, security and prosperity of Europe and its role in the world and RECOGNISING the actual and potential contributions from space activities towards the Lisbon strategy for growth and employment by providing enabling technologies and services for the emerging European knowledge society and

contributing to European cohesion,

EMPHASISING the unique contributions space-based systems can provide to the overall research effort and to applications responding to European policies and objectives, RECOGNISING that the exploration of space contributes to answer far-reaching questions on the origin and evolution of life in the Universe as well as on the fundamental laws of physics,

UNDERLINING that space represents a significant element of Europe's Sustainable Development Strategy and is relevant to the Common Foreign and Security Policy, supporting their goals by providing vital information on critical global issues such as on Climate Change¹ and humanitarian aid,

RECOGNISING that for these reasons Europe cannot afford to lose out securing the benefits of space for its citizens and its policies and that Europe's space policy will allow Europe to continue to develop and make the best use of world class space infrastructures and applications, in order to stay a major player, solve global problems and improve the quality of life,

EMPHASISING that all of Europe's space activities contribute to the goals and fully respect the principles set out by the United Nations' "Outer Space Treaty", in particular:

- the exploration and use of outer space for the benefit and in the interests of all countries and the recognition of outer space as a province of all mankind,
- the use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes,
- the promotion of international co-operation in the exploration and use of outer space,

and that Europe supports the on-going efforts of the United Nations' Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) on the mitigation and prevention of space debris,

RECOGNISING the inspirational ability of space activities in attracting young people into science and engineering,

HIGHLIGHTING the rapid growth of the markets for satellite-based navigation and telecommunication applications,

¹ With reference to the recent report of the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the significant contribution space-based information systems can provide in this

EMPHASISING that Europe is among the leading space-faring actors in the world and remains committed to maintaining its position both via strengthened intra-European and international cooperation,

1. WELCOMES AND SUPPORTS the document on the European Space Policy, presented as a proposal of the ESA Director General and as a Communication of the European Commission, as a next step in establishing a coordinated and effective European space effort at the service of the European citizens,
2. TAKES NOTE OF the "Preliminary elements" of the European Space Programme associated with the ESP as a strategic planning tool, comprising all major space activities in Europe thereby supporting the optimization of public resources and skills when deciding and implementing the space policy,
3. INVITES the Member States to continue to support European objectives and European-level programmes including, where appropriate, with their national programmes and activities, thereby ensuring effectiveness and complementarity as to the European effort,
4. INVITES the European Commission, the ESA Director General and Member States, within the scope of the Framework Agreement, to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the European Space Policy,

II Further Steps – Programmes and Implementation

A. APPLICATIONS

5. WELCOMES the combined efforts of ESA and the European Union to implement large user-oriented initiatives such as GMES and GALILEO as well as the beginning efforts for increased development and exploitation of space related integrated applications, including in particular satellite communication services,

context for the future of our planet.

WELCOMES the European Commission's activities to further federate user-driven institutional demand in Europe, stemming from the policies of the European Union, CALLS FOR the introduction of regular independent quality and cost-efficiency assessments of large user-oriented space-based initiatives, involving users and Member States, with the objective of validating quality, relevance and cost-efficient performance of the overall systems and their services in the operational phase in order to further strengthen the user oriented approach,

6. RECOGNIZES the strategic value of sustainability for GMES and REAFFIRMS the objective for an operational and autonomous capability for GMES before the end of 2008 and EMPHASISES that the European Commission needs to propose for GMES in due time and after full consultation with Member States and ESA, arrangements for:
 - (i) financing, including facilitation of funding by the users
 - (ii) operational infrastructures, and
 - (iii) effective management - to become fully operational and to ensure sustainable services responding to identified user needs,

WELCOMES the initiatives under the Austrian and German EU Presidencies towards the European Earth Observation Services GMES (i.e. the Graz Dialogue and the Munich Roadmap),

WELCOMES the approach to set up a preparatory action of the European Commission for the operational phase of GMES,

REAFFIRMS that GMES will use to the maximum extent possible existing capacities on European and national level, complementing each other.

7. SUPPORTS the joint efforts of the European institutions, ESA and the European industry to establish in the coming years a commercially sustainable global civil navigation satellite system under European civil control,

B. SECURITY AND DEFENCE

8. RECOGNIZES that space technologies are often common between civilian and defence applications and that Europe can, in a user-driven approach, improve coordination between defence and civilian space programmes, pursuing in particular the synergies in the domain of security, whilst respecting the specific requirements of both sectors and the independent decision competences and financing schemes,

AFFIRMS the need to set up a structured dialogue with the competent bodies of the Member States and within the EU Second and Third Pillars and the European Defence Agency for optimizing synergies between all aspects of the European Space Policy within the framework of the existing attribution of competences,

RECOGNISES that the uses made by any military users of GALILEO or GMES must be consistent with the principle that GALILEO and GMES are civil systems under civil control, and consequently that any change to this principle would require examination in the framework of Title V/TEU and in particular Articles 17 and 23 thereof, as well as in the framework of the ESA Convention".

C. ACCESS TO SPACE

9. EMPHASISES the vital importance for Europe to maintain an independent, reliable and cost-effective access to space at affordable conditions, as underlined in the EC-ESA Framework Agreement and in the Resolution on the evolution of the European launcher sector adopted during the ESA Council at Ministerial level in 2005, bearing in mind that a critical mass of launcher activities is a precondition for the viability of this sector,

RECOGNIZES the need for Europe to take advantage in a coherent way of the launcher assets under its control,

INVITES the ESA Director General to ensure continued development and coordination of European technological capabilities in order to pursue the long-term competitiveness of the European launcher sector with the objective to maintain and increase the presence in the commercial market,

D. INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION AND EXPLORATION

10. EMPHASISES the political and scientific importance of the International Space Station (ISS) and of exploration, and REAFFIRMS the continued strong and unified European commitment regarding its ISS contributions undertaken by ESA and its Member States,

CALLS on the international partners to the ISS to continue their support to ensure that the objectives of ISS partnership are maintained in their entirety, and STRESSES that the continuity of such partnership is a asset for future exploration endeavours,

ENCOURAGES the utilization of the ISS for research and development in the European Community's research framework programme,

EMPHASISES the importance of a proactive ESA participation in the preparation of future international exploration programmes, with the objective of ensuring a significant targeted and coordinated European role in this endeavour,

E. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

11. STRESSES the goal of maintaining world class scientific programmes and a clear European leading role in selected areas contributing to the build-up of the European Research Area,

RECOGNISES that the existing combined European skills and efforts, in particular in the frame of ESA, allow Europe to succeed in the most challenging enterprises and to reach a level of excellence for discovery and innovation in the global context,

CALLS on the European Commission, ESA and Member States to stimulate educational programmes in Europe,

EMPHASISES the importance of innovation and technological development also for the competitiveness of industry and the commercial success of its products and services,

STRESSES the need for a targeted approach for the development of strategic components, concentrating on selected critical components, for which dependency of European industry on international suppliers should be avoided, in order to achieve the optimum balance between technological independence, strategic cooperation with international partners and reliance on market forces,

F. GOVERNANCE

12. APPRECIATES that ESA has, for more than 30 years, provided an efficient structure for European cooperation on joint space projects, which could require though further flexibility and some evolution, and NOTES that the independence and reliability of ESA, thanks to the growing support of its Member States, contributes to the increasing role of Europe through the successful development of the European space sector and to the strong position of European space industry on world markets,

REAFFIRMS the roles and responsibilities of the European Union, ESA and Member States, as identified in the Orientations of the second meeting of the "Space Council". On the basis of such roles and in order to draw advantage of ESA experience and institutional setting, CALLS on the European Commission to draw on the management and technical expertise of ESA for managing the European Community-funded R&D space infrastructure programmes with ESA coordinating the relevant agencies and entities in Europe,

Such ESA role should also include:

- supporting the European Commission as technical expert in the elaboration of European Community initiatives involving space-related activities and relevant work programmes, and in the selection and monitoring of relevant work contractors,
- the management by ESA of European Community space-related activities in accordance with the rules of the European Community,

INVITES Member States - under the coordination of ESA - and in the case of significant European Community activities, in close cooperation with the European Commission:

- to provide the best expertise for European space programmes (such as GMES-Space Component, exploration programmes and future launcher programmes),

- to increase synergy between national, ESA and EC contributions to these programmes leading progressively to an integrated programmatic approach while respecting national sovereignty,

SUPPORTS the continuation of the Framework Agreement beyond May 2008 as the basis for the cooperation between the European Community and ESA, in the understanding that the Framework Agreement and its implementation will be periodically assessed and improved, if necessary, and RECALLING the invitation expressed in the orientations of the second meeting of the Space Council for a wide-ranging appraisal of possible cost-efficient scenarios for optimizing the organization of space activities in Europe, INVITES Member States, the European Commission and the ESA Director General to look for possible improvements of this cooperation, in order to further develop the orientations of the second meeting of the Space Council into more operational and practical arrangements, notably with regard to the issues listed in Annex 1,

13. RECOGNIZES the valuable contribution to the European Space Programme made by EUMETSAT, and INVITES EUMETSAT to keep participating in future meetings of the Space Council as an observer,

G INDUSTRIAL POLICY

14. RECOGNIZES that ESA has a flexible and effective industrial policy based on cost-efficiency, competitiveness, fair distribution of activities and competitive bidding, which secures adequate industrial capacities, global competitiveness and a high degree of inner-European competition for efficient European cooperation on joint space projects, thus providing the basis for the successful development of space in Europe,

EMPHASISES in this context in particular the political and economic dimension of ESA's "fair return" principle; and the importance to assess and improve, when necessary, the implementation of the "fair return" principle in view of the future challenges for industry to remain competitive in a changing environment worldwide while maintaining, and possibly increasing, Member States' motivation to invest in space,

15. EMPHASISES the crucial role of SMEs and the supplier industry for innovation and the exploration of new market opportunities,

16. INVITES the European Commission to develop adequate instruments and funding schemes for Community actions in the space domain, addressing notably the issues listed in Annex 2, taking into account the specificities of the space sector, the need to strengthen its overall and its industry's competitiveness and the necessity of a balanced industrial structure,

H. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

17. INVITES the European Commission, the ESA Director General and the Member States to develop and pursue a joint strategy and establish a coordination mechanism on international relations. This strategy should be consistent with Member State activities and is aimed at strengthening Europe's role in the global space field and at benefiting from international cooperation, notably with respect to the issues listed in Annex 3,

I. IMPLEMENTATION

18. INVITES the European Commission and the ESA Director General to propose an implementation plan for the European Space Policy in order to establish a process of regular monitoring and priority setting, taking also into account the issues listed in the Annexes.

Annex 1

1. Key issues for further developing the orientations of the second meeting of the Space Council into more operational and practical arrangements:

- Developing financial instruments suitable for an efficient implementation of space projects,
- Identifying final users of GMES services and their needs; develop an integrated and customized offer, including also the regional and local level,
- Defining the conditions under which satellites belonging to Member States and their data and services will be made available to GMES; the treatment of the contributions of national programmes to EU-initiatives, here in particular GMES.

Annex 2

2. Key issues to be considered in the implementation of instruments and funding schemes for Community actions:

- Developing a coherent data policy - including data access and pricing - conducive to the rapid development of the space services sector,
- Encouraging new financing schemes such as Public/Private Partnerships in the market for space applications and services, including through public support for R&D,
- Provision of suitable measures in support of technological innovation, involving lead-market initiatives, public procurement and support for suppliers and small and medium-sized companies and industries,

Annex 3

3. Key issues to be considered in the development of a strategy for international relations:

- Improving access to third markets for European space products and services,
- Reducing the cost of acquiring space systems by the targeted use of international cooperation,
- Enabling Europe to participate in ambitious programmes the cost of which is too great for any one space power,
- Attracting international partners to European conceived programmes, like in the case of Galileo and reinforcing the contribution of Europe to global initiatives, like in the case of GMES,
- Making full use of the potential of space systems for sustainable development, namely in support of developing countries, in particular in Africa.