

Final Resolution for the 6th European Interparliamentary Space Conference (EISC), held on November 10th and 11th 2004

The 6th European Interparliamentary Space Conference (EISC), held at the Congress of Deputies in Madrid on 10th and 11th November 2004, has adopted the following Resolution:

Part 1 – “The European Union’s, ESA’s and Member States’ contributions to the European Space Policy”

1. Bearing in mind the strategic importance for Europe of space activities and their relevant potential contribution of space to the construction of Europe, highlighted by the inclusion of a reference to space in the European Union’s Constitutional Treaty as a shared competency of the European Union and its Member States;

Considering the role played by the European Space Agency (ESA), as defined in its Convention, in the design and implementation of the European Long Term Plan and in promoting intergovernmental cooperation between European states, as well as the driver for international cooperation, given its unique nature as a multinational and multidisciplinary Agency;

Recognising the improvements in the cooperation between ESA and the European Commission, materialised through a growing number of joint initiatives of strategic importance to Europe, pre-eminently Galileo and GMES, as well as the consultation and debate process leading to the White Paper on the European Space Policy;

Noting the progress made towards the definition of a European Space Programme built on the Framework Agreement signed by both institutions, that provides for joint and concomitant meetings of the respective EU and ESA Councils, the first of which will be held on November 25th;

2. The EISC stresses the role of space as a driver for socio-economic development and the need that Europe has an independent capacity to design, deploy and operate space systems for the common good. To this end, the Conference calls on the European Union and ESA to make the maximum use of their respective strengths and capabilities;

To this end, the EISC calls on the European Commission to apply its regulatory capacity and its political support to strengthen the use of space as a tool for the execution of EU policies that are of interest to the public, drawing on the experience and potential on the public and private national entities, European institutions and, in particular, ESA, Europe’s reference implementing Space Agency and focal point for cooperation between European states;

3. The EISC also states its intention that space activity contributes consistently to the strengthening and structuring of a diverse, competitive and innovative industrial base in Europe, with a fair and balanced distribution of industrial space activities amongst all members of ESA, leading to an increased European productivity on the international market through established, accepted and transparent mechanisms. In this respect, the EISC calls upon ESA to keep the principle of "*juste retour*", recognising the difficulty of this given the structure of the European Industry, adapted to the new European institutional framework, as the cornerstone of its industrial policy;
4. In addition to the existing principle of "*juste retour*" applied in ESA, EISC calls upon the European Commission to assess the possibility of applying new industrial policy principles for EC funding of Space activities. A fair and balanced distribution of the industrial space activities for all countries of the EU is envisaged.
5. The EISC invites the European Commission and ESA to take advantage of their complementarities and synergies by developing new initiatives under the Framework Agreement signed by both parties, with a balanced and clear-cut allocation of roles. In this sense, the Conference requests that in these joint initiatives, the basic rules for funding, industrial policy, participation and decision making shall be the result of consensus amongst all Member States;
6. The EISC calls that the design of the future European Space Programme shall be compliant with the criteria of maximum transparency and balanced benefits to all States and citizens of the European Union. The Conference also invites ESA participate in the definition of the European Space Programme and to play a central role in the Programme's execution, as the common European expert body in this field, in compliance with the Resolutions adopted by the respective EU and ESA Councils on 16th November 2000 on the definition of a European Space Strategy;
7. The EISC believes that Europe should substantially increase the financial resources allocated to space, as indicated by Commissioner Philippe Busquin, in order to ensure the success of the European Space Policy and guarantee Europe the place it deserves in the field, taking into account the increased international competition brought about by the emergence of new space powers. In this sense, the EISC calls on the European Union to make larger financial commitments to space in the 2007-2013 financial perspectives;
8. Recalling the last European Interparliamentary Space Conference held in Berlin in 2003, the EISC confirms its support for a clear commitment of the European Union to include in the EU Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 budgets dedicated to answer to citizens need through space tools. This commitment is endorsed by the EU Constitutional Treaty as a shared competence. These budget commitments must be in addition to and complementary with the ESA role and activities.

The EISC calls on all EU member states to submit a detailed national budget plan to support the implementation of the EU Space Policy White Paper together with a prioritisation of programmes and initiatives by February 2005, in time for the decision on the EU Financial Perspectives 2007-2013.

9. The EISC calls upon ESA, the European Commission and the national governments and parliaments to recognise and protect the very important position of the SMEs and non-primes in the changing European industrial sector, where concentration around two or three prime contractors is almost finalised. SMEs in particular are the engine of development and progress in Europe and have an innovative role to play that is complementary to the prime contractors
10. EISC calls upon the Heads of Government to include space policy regularly in the agenda of the European Council.

Part 2 – “Europe’s commitment to space through the strengthening of its facilities and foundations”

11. The EISC requests for the adoption of the adequate measures to strengthen and consolidate pan-European reference centres in specific areas of scientific research related to space, as proposed by the Commission’s Communication on European policies and budgets beyond 2007, concentrating the continent’s best capabilities and strengthening European assets devoted to space;
12. The EISC invites the European Commission to join ESA in the effort deployed to the new scientifically-oriented programmes such as the use of the International Space Station, space-based Earth observation for scientific purposes, astronomy and astrophysics, so as to develop a balanced and comprehensive European Space Policy together with member states of EU and ESA;
13. The EISC requests ESA and the European Commission to guarantee European independence in fields of great strategic interest so as to ensure the security of space-based missions, systems and services derived from space, such as navigation, security, environmental monitoring, space surveillance, space meteorology, detection of Near Earth Objects and virtual observatories, providing the adequate budget to allow necessary continuity and sustainability of research, programmes and facilities;
14. The EISC invites ESA to strengthen the visibility of its space science and exploration missions and to leverage and promote the existing capabilities and assets in this field, in particular the European Space Astronomy Centre (ESAC) and other European centres, on the understanding that a better knowledge of this centres by European citizens, researchers, and technology experts is a key factor in promoting space vocations amongst the future generations of technicians and scientists;

15. The EISC encourages Europe's support of the ambitious initiatives in the field of solar system exploration, as the basis for assuring its own objectives as well as cooperating in beneficial terms with other space powers. The Conference also highlights the European Space Agency's Aurora programme as one of Europe's key initiatives towards the fulfilment of this objective and invites the European Commission to join in ESA's efforts, as well as Europe's continuing support for the ISS, in line with the schemes of cooperation set forth in the Framework Agreement;

Part 3 – "Space and citizens: space as a tool for the fulfilment of European policies"

16. Recognising that Galileo is the first major joint initiative in the cooperation between the European Union and the European Space Agency in the field of space;

Stressing that an autonomous satellite navigation system is a strategic requirement for Europe, so as to guarantee its technological independence and to promote the adoption of civilian navigation systems under international control, as requested by specialised international organisations;

Underlining that satellite navigation is a key element for the development of a knowledge-based society, due to the potential inherent to navigation applications and the role of space technology as a catalyst for industrial innovation, development of new products and services whose benefits are also applicable to other economic fields of activity;

The EISC recognises Europe's ongoing support to the Galileo programme, aimed at developing a competitive European industry in the field of satellite navigation, with a fair distribution of activities amongst all ESA and EU countries, able to take advantage of the role of SMEs as innovation drivers particularly in the development of applications and services;

The EISC encourages cooperation in civil utilisation and market development of Galileo with third states such as the United States, China, Ukraine, Russia, India, as well as new European Members States, emphasising on Europe's political, commercial and strategic importance in developing this system;

The EISC encourages ESA and the European Commission to optimise the development of Galileo and complete it on time and within budget.

17. Stressing that Europe requires autonomous Earth observation capabilities with a global coverage capable of offering a more effective response to the environmental management and to Europe's needs in the field of security;

Bearing in mind the benefits that an adequate management of natural resources and natural disasters (floods, forest fires, desertification, etc.) may bring to sustainable development as well as to the future prevention of conflicts in many areas all around the world.

Recognising ESA, the European Commission's, and national achievements in guaranteeing that the GMES initiative makes use of European national programmes and systems, both existing and to be developed, as well as ensuring the necessary coordination and cross-fertilisation of the European system and those developed by other partners;

The EISC requests that, in line with Galileo, GMES also contributes to the European Union's objectives in international cooperation, taking advantage of the global dimension of this initiative. Parliamentary groups also hope that the services demanded to GMES may boost the development of new European space-based Earth observation systems, with potential applications both inside and outside the Union;

18. Bearing in mind that space can play a key role in making the benefits of the knowledge society available to all citizens by leveraging the satellite telecommunications synergies that render other complementary technologies possible;

The EISC calls on the European Commission and ESA to promote a European initiative with global scope to reduce the Digital Divide by means of an efficient collaboration between the two organizations granting an important role to the space component, which will ensure a universal and seamless service;

Finally, in line with the requests regarding Galileo and GMES, the EISC calls for the European Initiative to reduce the Digital Divide to be conceived since its beginning as a system taking into account also market conditions and open to international cooperation, not only to an enlarged Europe, but also beyond the EU borders, in order to make this initiative more attractive to European industry, thus opening new economic markets enabling the projection of the European social model to other regions of the world;

19. The EISC recognises the specific role of Europe in the setting up of a development policy related to Africa and Latin-America, specifically in the field of tele-education, tele-medicine and e-governance; taking into account existing European telecommunication satellite infrastructures as well as new initiatives currently under definition (i.e. Digital Divide).

20. Concerning the European access to space, the EISC acknowledges with satisfaction that the improvement in Arianespace's financial situation in 2003 will be confirmed in 2004. The EISC calls upon the full implementation of the recommendations made by the European Commission White Paper on the European launch capacity, meaning:

- a firm commitment to an independent, reliable and affordable access to space,
- encouragement for European institutional customers to use preferably European launchers,
- develop and negotiate a worldwide harmonised regulatory framework governing procurement and competition in the launcher market,

ESA to remain the leading agency for launcher development while the EU commits funding for sustaining operational ground infrastructure as an areas

of common European interest complementing a coherent European launcher initiative, notably in view of a strategic partnership with Russia. Thus, committed funding has yet to be discussed for continuing operations.

The EISC fully supports the growing cooperation with Russia, with the Russian Soyuz to be launched from the European Spaceport in Kourou.

Part 4 – “Space as a vehicle for international cooperation both inside and outside the enlarged European Union”

21. Recognising the valuable contribution that the new enlargement European Union Members States can make through new lines of research and innovation based on space systems that will benefit all European citizens and Europe as a whole;

Fully aware of the large potential offered by space to strengthen economic cooperation and open new markets for space applications in other geographical areas of priority interest for Europe, such as the Mediterranean basin, Latin America , Russia and Asia;

Bearing in mind the International Conference on Space Cooperation, organised jointly by the European Commission and the European Space Agency, to be held on February 17th and 18th in Brussels;

The EISC calls for the reinforcement of this type of initiatives and the exploitation of space as a tool for international cooperation that takes advantage of the well know Europe’s openness with regards to R+D towards other regions in a spirit of mutual benefit;

Likewise, the EISC believes that international cooperation must indeed become one of the future European Space Policy’s priorities, focusing on those geographical areas that enjoy privileged relations with the European Union;

Finally, the EISC also encourages the European Commission and the European Space Agency, as the sole multinational and multidisciplinary agency in the world, to continue promoting its relationship with other regions of the world, either through cooperation agreements or association agreements with other interested countries, inside and outside the enlarged Europe.

Part 5 – “European Space and the ESDP and CFSP: synergy and complementarity”

22. Recalling the conclusions of the Vth European Interparliamentary Space Conference, stating that “Space makes important contributions in connection with national and European foreign and security policy, primarily through communication networks, reconnaissance systems and navigation”,

Recalling Conclusion 14 of the Conclusions of the European Interparliamentary Space Conference held in Berlin in 2003, concerning ESAs role in space activities for security and defence purposes.

Recognising the importance of space applications and functions to support and enhance the EU capabilities to carry out crisis management operations,

Considering the report of the Group of Personalities recognising the crucial character of space based assets for a secure Europe,

Underlining that new sources of threat (i.e terrorism and international organized crime) and risks (i.e illegal immigration) plague Europe along with the rest of the world and that no single country can tackle such complex problems alone,

The EISC calls upon the European Union and its member states to further develop in close coordination the necessary space applications such as communication networks, reconnaissance systems and navigation;

The EISC emphasises on the importance of the development of dual use technology in order to have the benefits of these technologies for civil and security applications;

The EISC believes that an integrated approach to the development of space applications that use multiple use technology and common (civil and security) standards, is the best guarantee for significant cost-effective collective achievements in the European Space field. This approach should encompass and coordinate the views of related actors across the European spectrum, including the European Space Agency, the European Defence Agency and other European-wide and national institutions.

The EISC calls for the appropriate exploitations of space systems for security and defence purposes and as indispensable tools for an effective implementation of the EU CSFP and ESDP. Thus, the ESIC is looking forward to a dedicated security and defence chapter of the European Space Programme to be drawn jointly by the European Commission and ESA.

Part 6 – “Space and education: enhancing public awareness for space issues and motivating young people for space studies”

23. Considering the importance of general public support for the development of a European Space Policy, in light of the allocation of the required national budgets,

Considering the decreasing interest of young people in science studies, creating in the long run a shortage of qualified people needed to replace the current work force in the space sector,

The EISC calls upon the national governments, national parliaments, European institutions and ESA to do everything in their power to promote science and other vital studies for the space sector, and to explain to the general public the importance of space for the European and national economies, politics and everyday life.

24. In this respect, reference can be made to the European KEO project, supported by UNESCO as Project of the 21st Century that envisages the development and launch in 2006 of a satellite containing messages of every interested individual with the purpose of returning back to Earth after 50.000 years. The EISC calls upon all European and national authorities to make sure the necessary funding and support is found to have this European KEO satellite launched by European means.

Part 7 – “Final practical remarks”

25. The next European Interparliamentary Space Conference will be held under French Presidency in June 2005 in Paris during the “Le Bourget Air Show”.

The EISC calls upon the next presidencies to do everything necessary to enlarge the number of member states of the EISC, based on the principles put forward in the 1999 EISC Charter. In addition, the EISC also calls upon the next presidencies to increase the numbers of invited observers from Europe’s areas of influence (e.g. Latin America), either proposed by the Executive or by EISC members states.

26. The Spanish Presidency of the EISC will send these conclusions to the institutions of the European Union, the EU Presidency, ESA, the Assembly of the WEU as well as to the national governments and parliaments of the member states of the European Union and ESA, and the main third countries actives in space (United States, Russia, China, Japan, India, Brazil, etc.)

In addition to that, the EISC invites National Parliaments and the European Parliament to maintain a fluent dialogue with the institutions related to space activities in order to regularly share information among all parties involved.