

Kourou, September 20<sup>th</sup> 2006

I have to start by making an admission. I prepared this contribution yesterday on the plane from Paris. But one headline in the Financial Times of last Monday was so helpful that I want to use it: "In case of emergency, use satellite". Stop calling the cavalry, call Iridium.

This little phrase is helpful in introducing some of my statements.

First, space has come of age.

This statement may seem obvious but for me it has a lot of relevance for the topic of your seminar. Nobody is still questioning whether space should have a place in an overall strategic defence and or security policy. Of course it should. Both on a strategic and on a tactical level no decision can be made or executed without help from space technology. Policy makers should therefore put these tools at the disposal of their men and women in the services.

Europe wants to reinforce its own independent security policy with a stronger military force at its disposal. An independent military force at a continental level without an equivalent space force is no option.

What type of investments has to be made is not for me to address. I am here in Guyana to represent the minister of science policy and the minister of economic affairs not the foreign office or let alone the ministry of defence. But that investments have to be made, based upon sound operational needs of our military and security forces is clear for the Belgian Government.

ESA and the EU have addressed the rather complicated institutional hurdles that have to be taken before these decisions can be made at a really European level.

What I want to stress is ESA and the EU will need to set up an integrated policy for the development, exploitation and use of the space infrastructure required. Who defines the threats? Is it clear who defines the operational needs at a European level? Who makes the technological choices? Who will be responsible for its overall implementation?

Up until now ad hoc solutions have been found and, unfortunately, ad hoc institutions have been created.

European self-sufficiency might be a term long out-dated from a purely economical point of view. However, a Europe with an own independent supra-national security policy will need a more efficient supra-national structure.

I thereby want to stress the supra-national of the effort required and let me make the parallel with the history of European space.

National initiatives were the basis for the successful European space programs. But the opening towards real supra-national co-operation was the key to success. This was

made possible by the flexibility laid down in the ESA procedures: member states can decide whether to participate or not in most of ESA's programmes and at what level. Under EU rules such flexibility is not possible.

Within the EU R&D Framework Programme efforts have been made to introduce this flexibility (art. 169) but with a very heavy procedure.

The efficiency of the ongoing efforts would increase if this flexibility could be introduced in the programming effort for a European defence and security policy.

Belgium intends to support these efforts as it did before. Not only orally but also with taxpayers' money that is as difficult to raise in Belgium as it is in any other part of the world.

But we should look at an overall strategic policy making body where all the questions I have mentioned can be dealt with.

To be honest, a long list of existing initiatives was given this morning. Too long a list. I want to stress the need of a unified effort, not linked to a specific project but offering a model for new initiatives.

If we do agree on the necessity and even inevitable character of this scheme and of investing in space for defence and security reasons, we will have to agree on the conditions applicable.

What type of armament can be deployed in space or is space a purely support for the personnel on the terrain? With whom can information be shared? Where does the need for an independent European "space force" start?

These questions have to be answered by our parliaments and governments. Is it fair to say that answers are not always unequivocal today? Putting the questions is answering them.

Why is it that we all agree upon the need of a European defence, even aeronautical industry, but that many are less outspoken about an own European defence and security branch in space industry?

I dare to hope that most of you in this audience are but taken from the perspective of the topic of your seminar I want to give you two elements to consider.

First, let the military be the military and let the police be the police.

They have to define their needs. Under the control of each national parliament and of the supra-national assemblies represented here but their real needs should always be the cornerstone.

My second element is merely the other side of the medal.

Feasible solutions for sometimes complicated operational questions can be found within the already existing space technologies. Already this morning this was

underlined. Existing telecom systems, GMES, Galileo and of course Ariane and related programmes also have a role to play in defence and security.

Using space to enhance the military capacity and the safety of a nation does not always require the completely new development of huge dedicated systems. Dual use from the other perspective.

If these conditions are fulfilled one can look at the role our industry can play in these programmes without any hesitation.

We should not be afraid to introduce the notion of industrial return in well-defined military and security programs without risking Mac Namara's nightmare of the military- industrial complex becoming a reality.

The security policy makers and our industries could thus become independent partners at a European level.

And it is our conviction in Belgium, the biggest of the smaller space investors in Europe, that we need this.

We will therefore continue to support the pan-European efforts of ESA the EU and we'll continue to look for ways of improving the efficiency of our efforts as part of an overall European effort.

Hans Bracquené