

EUROPEAN PARLEMENT

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The different aspects of a European Space Policy

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the European Parliaments' Subcommittee on Security and Defence, I cannot tell you how grateful we are for your kind invitation to have a team of us take part in this seminar. I would like to thank our hosts :

- the VIIIth European Interparliamentay Space Conference, which organised together with the WEU Assembly this seminar
- The European Space Agency
- Arianespace
- the Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales and the French authorities

The benefits of a European space programme for the protection of our planet, for the education of peoples, for economic and industrial development world-wide and also for our own security are key political aspects that we are discussing today.

What I would like to do in the time that has been allocated to me is to explain the mutual beneficial linkages, which in my view should be established between the European Space Policy and the European Security and Defence Policy.

Why is a common European Space Policy so important for the goals of the ESDP, which aims at protecting European citizens from risks ? A common European Space Policy is vital because a close connection exists between civilian and military crisis management and because the technologies to be used are dual.

For example, national and EU officials, both civilian and military, are today engaged in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorists attacks; European police officers are controlling the EU external borders while European soldiers and civilian officials, such as humanitarian relief personnel, are involved in dealing with natural catastrophes and in post-conflict situations in the Balkans, Central Africa and in the Middle East.

To undertake efficiently all these activities, it is essential that European soldiers, police, custom officers, members of the disaster prevention services and humanitarian relief officers are equipped with the best possible form of satellite technology which provides for better intelligence, navigation, communication and early warning.

A common European space policy will facilitate mobility and interaction between different multinational teams composed of different services by connecting their headquarters. It will contribute to resolving interoperability challenges.

A European space policy can also contribute to the monitoring of borders and territorial waters and provided important source of intelligence during the stages of early warning, planning and undertaking of ESDP operations.

The link between the ESDP and the European Space Policy already exists thanks to a number of developments which, to simplify complexity, could be grouped under four headings :

- intelligence/observation
- communication
- navigation
- early warning.

Intelligence/Observation

- GMES, (the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security)
- Hélios I and II
- SAR-Lupe
- Pleiades
- COSMO-SkyMed
- Rapid Eye
- And the EU satellite centre at Torrejon (Spain)

There is also the programme known as BOC : “Besoins Opérationnels Communs”. This is the first step towards an autonomous European capacity in strategic imagery, because it is aimed to provide for a military satellite observation system that builds on the individual elements of SAR-LUPE, Cosmos-SkyMed, Pleiades and Helios.

Communication

- Syracuse III
- Skynet 5
- SATCOMBw
- Sicral
- SPAINSAT

Navigation

- Galileo

Early warning

We still need this capability. We are not able to detect incoming missiles while there is a proliferation of this kind around the Mediterranean. We have to think whether we want to combine this capacity with an anti-missile defence system or whether we prefer an approach based on conflict prevention.

Unfortunately there remain some obstacles to the successful synergy between the European Space Policy and the ESDP.

1. Despite the growth in civilian and military assets of some European countries, the record of the European Space Agency and the progress made with Galileo system and with the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES), it cannot be said that we have a coherent European space policy at present. This means that we are not yet fully able to exploit the technology for civilian and military crisis management.
2. There is a lack of financial resources for the European space programme. I welcome the allocation of some 1.4 billion euros for space activities in the 7th Framework Programme (2007-2013). This represents an increase over the 235 million euros allocated to space activities in FP6. However, since 1.2 billion has already been earmarked for GMES that leaves only 200 million euros for launchers, exploration, technological development, science projects and international cooperation. The issue of funding needs therefore to be re-evaluated.
3. We need to explore how far we want to go with the “Revolution in military affairs” that space technology has fostered. Already US commanders in distant headquarters can now use information from space to locate on screen, in real time, their forces and those of their opponents, and guide weapons precisely to their targets. This “digitisation” of the battlefield has encouraged US military officers to think in terms of communication “networks” that link air, naval and ground forces, rather than to focus on traditional “platforms” such as aircraft, ships and tanks. This is the American concept of “network-centric warfare” and we Europeans have to decide whether we want to embrace fully this revolution with all the consequences for military doctrine, military spending and, last but not least, for delegating at the EU level decision-making in military affairs.
4. It is essential that there is civilian authority over space programmes and parliamentary control. Although the European Space Council is supposed to have overall civilian authority, it is not yet fully clear how it will work and it will be democratically important that there is a debate and support within the European Parliament and the national parliaments for its decisions.
5. We also still lack a system to protect space assets. We do not have sufficient capabilities to monitor the physical and spatial environment from risks such as space debris and overcrowding. Hence we need to have capabilities for “space situation awareness.”

To conclude, it will be important that these difficulties are addressed and that the European Commission, the Council, the European Defence Agency and the Member States continue in their efforts to establish an inter-pillar dialogue to ensure global coherence of all the actors in these policy area and takes into account their needs and requirements. The European Parliament will make an important contribution to this debate and in this regard, we would like to remind the unique contribution of EU institutions to the prevention of the deployment of weapons in space.

The EU should prohibit operations in space that risk destabilising international proliferation regimes and terrestrial security, such as for example, the stationing of nuclear weapons in space or even their detonation at high altitude. It should do so through a common European space policy. By so doing the nexus between European Space Policy and the ESDP will be in full adherence with our common norms and values of promoting peace, security, economic and social development.