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NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Delegations

Subject: Draft Council conclusions "Underpinning the European space renaissance: orientations and future challenges"

With a view to the Space Working Party meeting on 29 September 2014, delegations will find attached the first Presidency draft of Council conclusions on "Underpinning the European space renaissance: orientations and future challenges".

DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS

"Underpinning the European space renaissance: orientations and future challenges"

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

HAVING REGARD to the Framework Agreement between the Union and the European Space Agency (the "Framework Agreement")¹;

HAVING REGARD to the UE Council resolutions and orientations adopted and those of the "Space Council" notably in 2007² and 2008³, defining the objectives and priority areas of the European Space Policy, as well as in 2009⁴, defining the contribution of Space to innovation and competitiveness in Europe; and WELCOMING the progress achieved by the European Commission and ESA in the implementation of the European Space Policy;

HAVING REGARD to the Council Conclusions on "Towards a shared EU-ESA vision for space fostering competitiveness" of 26 May 2014⁵, in particular the preamble as well as point 12 thereof;

RECALLING the European Council Conclusions⁶ of 23 December 2013 which welcomed the preparations for the next generation of Governmental Satellite Communication through close cooperation among the Member States, the Commission and the European Space Agency; and asked for a users' group to be set up in 2014;

¹ OJ L 261 of 6.8.2004, p. 64.

² doc. 10037/07

³ doc. 13569/08

⁴ doc. 10500/09

⁵ doc. 10289/14

⁶ EUCO 217/13

TAKING NOTE of the Commission's report "A new deal for European defence - Implementation Roadmap for Communication COM (2013) 542; Towards a more competitive and efficient defence and security sector"⁷;

RECALLING the recently approved European Procurement Directive⁸;

[TAKING NOTE of the outcome of the ESA Council at ministerial level, held in Luxembourg on 2nd December 2014, and in particular the resolutions on ESA evolution.]

Exploiting Union Space Programmes

1. RECOGNISES the progress made with the implementation of the European Space Policy objectives, in particular with the entry into force of the European Satellite Navigation Systems and Programmes (European GNSS), Copernicus and Horizon 2020 programmes, the Satellite Surveillance and Tracking (SST) Support Framework and UNDERLINES that their successful implementation constitutes a priority.
2. RECALLS that the EU GNSS and Copernicus programmes are expected to create substantial European market opportunities, in particular for European industry and SMEs, through the development of value-added downstream services, also relevant at global level; UNDERLINES that this growth should be promoted and supported by the Union through the development of best practices, standards in relevant areas and, where appropriate, regulatory measures coupled with the removal of administrative barriers, with a view to ensuring the widespread uptake of Union space programmes in as many sectorial policy areas as possible, showing the improvement of the quality of life for the larger possible part of European citizens.

⁷ doc. 11358/14

⁸ OJ L 94 of 28.3.2014, p. 65.

3. RECOGNISES the unique contribution of space programmes which, through their global observation capacity and long-term coverage, provide the scientific community with series of data requested for research into medium-long term weather forecast and climate change, while complementing other observation and measurement tools.
4. ACKNOWLEDGES the significant progress made in meteorology with the preparation of the Meteosat Third Generation system and associated modeling and forecasting capacities which are expected to ensure European leadership in the global context. In this regard UNDERLINES the importance of services seamlessly integrating navigation, observation and communications space systems as well as their improved integration with ground infrastructure, to ensure monitoring and forecasting of the Earth environment including, where appropriate, now-casting.

Long-term vision and policy

5. STRESSES that a shared long-term European space vision should allow: responding to public policy objectives and user needs; enabling new economic growth and job creation in Europe; supporting world-class scientific progress; as well as securing the European capability to conceive, develop, launch, operate and exploit space systems. UNDERLINES that such vision is a pre-requisite for an appropriate evolution in the relations among the EU, ESA, their respective Member States and other relevant European actors.
6. CONSIDERS that time is ripe to start reflecting on and preparing future initiatives by the Union in the context of further advancing of the European Space Policy while consolidating ongoing space programmes.
7. INVITES, therefore, on the basis of the results already achieved the Commission to review, in consultation with Member States, the ESA DG and other relevant actors, the European Space Policy and to identify to what extent it may require to be updated, having due regard to and respect for both of the related TFEU and ESA Convention provisions and CALLS on the Commission, following consultation with the ESA DG, to devise a shared long-term vision, which will meet the long-term needs of European users, particularly in EU policies, taking into account the orientations provided hereto and which can be used by all actors as a planning tool for major space activities in Europe.

8. INVITES the Commission to propose, in consultation with ESA DG, a pragmatic cooperation scheme on this basis and to focus on what specific amendments to the EU-ESA Framework Agreement may be useful to further implement the European Space Policy; and UNDERLINES that this scheme should take stock of the lessons learnt from the Union space programmes; accordingly INVITES the Commission to analyse these previous experiences, identifying key issues and adequate solutions, with a view to propose an improved governance for space activities in Europe including a mechanism for the preparation of a consolidated Union position regarding Union programmes or policies.

Emerging priorities

9. UNDERLINES the need to continue pursuing synergies of space, security, and defence related activities; WELCOMES current collaboration among the European Commission, the European External Action Service, the European Defence Agency (EDA) and ESA to fulfill this goal and STRESSES the importance of an appropriate space and security coordination platform, involving Member States.
10. RECOGNISES that Satellite Communications (SATCOM) is a unique capability which can ensure long-distance communications and broadcasting. Given the nature of security activities, there is a growing demand on the use of governmental satellite communications (GOVSATCOM) among security actors and therefore UNDERLINES the importance of investigating on potential forms of collaboration with Member States with the intent, in line with the Pooling and Sharing concept, to resort or access to their GOVSATCOM assets to fulfil EU operational requirements.

11. WELCOMES the initiatives of the Commission and the EDA to support security actors on the use of GOVSATCOM; WELCOMES the setting up of an expert user group, bringing together Commission services, the European External Action Service, EDA and ESA in order to develop a coherent framework to avoid fragmentation of demand and to prepare the next generation of Governmental Satellite Communication; accordingly, building on the defence user requirements adopted in the EDA framework and on the security user requirements consolidated by the Commission, CALLS on the expert user group to prepare a high-level civil user requirement document for the next generation of GOVSATCOM should be endorsed by Member States and could form the basis for a preparatory action in view of a future dedicated Union initiative.
12. NOTES that the Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) development represents a potential opportunity to foster job creation and a source for innovation, technological independence and economic growth INVITES to pursue the progressive integration of Space and Aerospace services and technologies to the use of RPAS in a safe and sustainable manner within civilian airspace;
13. WELCOMES the Decision establishing Space Surveillance and Tracking (SST) support framework which sets the foundations for the protection of Union space systems and REAFFIRMS the need for securing an acceptable level of European autonomy in SST activities based on Member States assets and resources and taking into account the European added value.
14. UNDERLINES the strategic importance of autonomous, reliable and cost-efficient access to space at affordable conditions for the EU, ESA and their respective Member States, based on the availability of competitive world-class launch systems and operational European capacities, including the European spaceport and other relevant facilities both within and outside Europe, and the technologies which are critical to their development and production, including of innovative launch systems.

15. EMPHASISES equally the importance of research and innovation for the competitiveness of industry and the need for a targeted approach for the development of critical components, for which dependency of European industry on international suppliers should be limited, in order to achieve the optimal balance between technological independence, strategic cooperation with international partners and reliance on market forces.
16. INVITES the Commission to analyse the political and industrial context for space taking stock of the experience gained in the Union space programmes [and the outcome of the ESA Council meeting at ministerial level on 2 December 2014]; to explore possibilities for sustainable institutional markets for critical technologies and critical systems, in particular launchers; and to present an action plan, taking into account security aspects both at European and global scale, addressing the institutional market needs for European launchers through a resource pooling scheme at European level, and considering the use of innovative procurement approaches, thus underpinning European capacity building and non-dependence.
17. UNDERLINES that Horizon 2020 should support development of technology in the framework of the aforementioned strategic priorities taking into account possible dual use benefit and related activities conducted by Member States and ESA.

Space exploration and science

18. WELCOMES the coordination mechanism for space exploration through the International Space Exploration Conference; RECALLS that space exploration is a political endeavour and a grand challenge; UNDERLINES its value for inspiring young Europeans to choose a career in science and technology, as well as the need for developing a long-term strategy taking into account the global coordination of the major powers' plans for human and robotic exploration as well as associated effort, capacities and priorities.

19. STRESSES the goal of maintaining a leading space science capacity, keeping the pioneering momentum, which can ensure that Europe remains at the forefront of new discoveries and challenging projects, as well as achieving a better understanding of fundamental questions regarding the Universe, our Solar System, the planet Earth and its environment;
RECOGNISES the importance of research in space which, coupled to terrestrial research programmes, allows finding solutions to health problems related to various diseases, ageing and immobility and can drive the identification of new ideas and opportunities for the future thus enabling the fruitful development of the technologies and infrastructures to serve Europe.

Next steps

20. INVITES the Commission to report to the Council and the European Parliament, by 2016, on the progress made with regard to these orientations with a view to adequately preparing the mid-term review of the current Multiannual Financial Framework for all space-related aspects through a comprehensive, collaborative and forward-looking approach.
