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EUROPEAN SATCOM POLICY FOR AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT

**Abstract**

The purpose of the paper is to highlight how the European SatCom policy can affect the African Development. One of the European policy priorities is the Digital Agenda with the ambition to bring broadband to every European citizen by 2013. This policy initiative has to pursue the European growth as smart, sustainable and inclusive. The targets of the Digital Agenda can be pursued by different technologies, including SatCom. The advantage of SatCom is to assure a uniform quality of services over a huge area of coverage. Due to the geographical position an appropriate SatCom solution can assure broadband for Europe and for a large part of Africa. The last European Space Council in 2010 is mentioning the partnership on space with Africa for a sustainable development of African continent achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The expansion of broadband is a critical factor in development, and in meeting the MDGs. There is a value of broadband in delivering health services and education, as well as its role in cultural diversity and the generation of economic activity and management of climate change, natural disasters and other global crises. Highlighting the need for governments to raise broadband to the top of the development agenda and speed up its rollout, the importance of providing affordable broadband in the least developed countries is recommended. It should be stressed the role of SatCom as the best tool in the provision of broadband services in rural and remote areas or in the case of natural disasters when land infrastructure is not available. In addition, this policy approach permits to fill the message coming from the international space law establishing the principle: the exploration and use of outer space shall be carried out for the benefit of all people. The paper will be constituted by two sections; the first one is describing the setting of broadband issues for Europe and Africa in terms of policy and technology; the second one is presenting the current and planned SatCom capacities serving Europe and Africa through Ka-band transponders where the partnership on space with Africa is envisaged to be enhanced.