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National Space Policies and Programmes, and Regional Cooperation (1)

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A DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL PROGRAMS AND IT'S IMPACT
ON THE GLOBAL SPACE DOMAIN.

Abstract

Over the last decade we have witnessed a steady rise in the number of nations interested in accessing space, or space based technology and industry. Whilst current treaties aim to provide the basis for the sustainable, equitable and secure access to space for current and future users of space, the very fact that a number of have still not acceded to these treaties puts the future at risk.

This paper emphasizes the need for expanded international cooperation and the commitment of nations to act responsibly in space in order to prevent mishaps, misconceptions and mistrust. It considers how local cooperation in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas could be used as a stepping stone to develop an international framework for collaboration.

The proposed framework would assess the needs of individual actors and most importantly focuses solely on the civilian and commercial space sectors. By doing so we help to build trusting relationships between actors and address the future financial viability of the space domain. The ethos of such a body would be to ensure sustainable and secure access to space whilst promoting technology transfer and collaboration amongst member groups. It would act as a global platform to discuss issues of collective interest, develop agreements that oversee operations and promote transparency. This clear distinction between programs would open up avenues for trusted nations and private companies to trade and transfer technology related to the civil and commercial space sectors more openly, leading to greater competition within the industry.

The paper also discusses how the proposed framework would draw funds from member nations ensuring that each investor/actor has a vested interest in ensuring the security and safe passage of technology and products developed within the framework. This vital interest by all parties would help promote a peaceful yet competitive environment for future space actors. It would also make it possible for emerging space faring nations to participate on a global scale and reap the benefits of space without having to initiate the costly process of setting up an indigenous program, but most importantly such a framework would provide a more sustainable development path for human exploration of space.