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EU AND ESA: STILL A LONG WAY TO ESTABLISH ANY APPROPRIATE RELATIONS?

Abstract

The art. 189 (3) TFEU : "The Union shall establish any appropriate relations with the European Space Agency." This provision gives the European Union a clear mandate in relation to ESA which emphasizes the need for cooperation between both organizations in space. However, it does not in any way predefine the nature of the relations nor does it affect other relevant provisions of the Treaty.

This paper will analyze the evolution of the EU-ESA relations, taking into account the different perspectives set up in the last documents issued by the EU and the ESA: a) the European Commission has identified in its Communication "Establishing appropriate relations between the European Union (EU) and the European Space Agency (ESA)" -COM(2012)671- several structural issues that need to be addressed and has presented in 2014 the first Progress Report; and b) the Council of the European Union has adopted the "Conclusions towards a shared EU-ESA vision for space fostering competitiveness" in May 2014; and c) the ESA Council at Ministerial Level adopted a Resolution in December 2014 con ESA evolution where the Ministers set a course for ESA to remain an independent, world-class intergovernmental organization.