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SMALL SATELLITE RESEARCHES AND DEVELOPMENT OF SPACE TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE
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Abstract

The Space Technology Institute (STI), under Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology (VAST), was established in 2006 by the Decision of the Prime Minister. Its tasks are to research and develop satellite technology to apply, especially in remote sensing, GIS and GPS; to establish infrastructure for space technology; to promote education and training activities; and to explore international cooperation. In these recent years, under the “Strategy for space technology research and application by 2020” approved by the Prime Minister, STI has several research and development activities on space technology, focusing on small satellite technology. A pico satellite, named Pico-Dragon, is developed with the technical consultancy of JAXA and plans to launch in 2010. This satellite with one kilogram in weight and 10cmx10cmx10cm in size has a low-resolution camera for earth observation. The Hoa Lac Space Center Project was studied with feasibility report by the Japan JETRO study team and will be constructed in near future. In this center, an ATI Center for Small Satellite below 500kg will be developed. In parallel with infrastructure building, an earth observation satellite with optical or radar sensor will be developed through technology transfer from oversea to reach the ability to develop and utilize small satellite by 2020 by Vietnam itself. Moreover, we have been extending our collaboration with many other international space organizations and forum in order to get information and experiences to promote research and applications of space technology. In 2008, the 15th Asia Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum- APRSAF was held firstly in Vietnam with the theme “Space for Sustainable Development”. Besides, STI was active to join international projects as Sentinel Asia Project and APRSAF-Satellite (STAR project). Vietnam is official one of STAR project members by signing the MOU with JAXA in 2008 and participating technical meetings to start this project. In next years, STI will mainly develop human resource and capacity building, extend international relationship through joint projects, and build space infrastructure, especially Hoa Lac Space Center project.