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Contribution of Space Activities to Solving Global Societal Issues (2)

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THE ROLE OF NATIONAL SPACE STRATEGIES IN ADDRESSING GLOBAL SOCIETAL
CHALLENGES THROUGH OUTER SPACE

Abstract

Outer space is becoming increasingly essential for sustainable development and in addressing pressing worldwide challenges such as migration and security. Technology and scientific advancements in this area need however to be duly accompanied by political and strategic approaches that, even when national, take due attention to the global environment and the challenges thereto. Indeed, it cannot be expected that outer space utilisation to the solution of global challenges can be effectively pursued without the engagement of all countries affected by such challenges. This is becoming increasingly recognised, as a growing number of states, including developing nations and unsuspected small countries with no tradition in investing or using space resources, are becoming aware of the importance of outer space products and services and are thus approving space policies. This paper will analyse the crucial role of correctly framing the use of outer space in responding to global challenges. Within this scope, the paper will give as an example the approach taken by Cabo Verde to space affairs. Cabo Verde is a small island country located in the Atlantic that drafted a comprehensive Space Strategy that took into consideration the instrumental character of outer space in addressing national and international challenges such as in monitoring of outer seas, air and sea security, crime prevention and management of catastrophes. Because global challenges need global solutions and cooperation, Cabo Verde correctly highlighted its role in space within the African Union (given the approval of the AU Space Strategy and Policy), ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), CPLP (Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries), SIDS (Small Islands Developing States) and the EU outermost regions. Hence, by means of analysing the Cabo Verde Space Strategy, this paper will highlight several points: how space activities are fundamental to address the common societal challenges of all countries and regions in the world; how an effective response to such challenges requires a worldwide vision even when devising national space strategies; how there is a growing awareness of the role that space activities play in the resolution of such challenges; how states should formally frame space activities by means of space strategies that show their commitment to space activities and, finally, how an increasingly cooperative and aligned approach to outer space is fundamental to guarantee that global challenges are properly addressed to the benefit of all mankind.