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International Cooperation for the benefits of developing countries and emerging space nations (1)

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DIGITAL DIVIDE AND COMMUNICATION SATELLITE SERVICES: THE OPPORTUNITY  
OFFERED BY ODA

**Abstract**

ICT impact on developing countries economic ambition is well known. As a matter of fact, digital switchover is very high on the agenda in Africa. Seven submarine cable systems since 2009 have transformed the availability of bandwidth in Africa's coastal regions. Most African countries now have some form of fiber connectivity to one or more submarine cable landing stations. Meanwhile, competition has crashed the wholesale price-per-megabit-per-second by over 80%. The importance of international cooperation for the development of the digitalization in Africa through the services offered by constellations of communication satellites is incontrovertible. The question is how to implement such a cooperation. A possibility is offered by a new phenomenon that the OECD is starting to analyse and evaluate, namely the intensification of the link between development aid - "official development assistance" (ODA) - and space applications. These ODA data are very promising and speak of a possible strong increase in the near future. They could well be used for the delivery of satellite communication services in remote areas of developing countries. One project of particular socio-economic impact is the web connection of all schools in the remote areas.