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ADVANCING KEY FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES VIA SPACE: CASE STUDY FOR EUROPE

Abstract

This paper takes an innovative approach to space and foreign policy. It does not merely promote the use of existing space capabilities to be exercised in foreign policy decision-making, but rather starts from the other end of this equation. Specifically, it identifies a clear set of key foreign policy objectives and offers space applications as instruments for their implementation, thus generating greater demand. This analytic method, exemplified in this paper, should prove useful for all States or regions utilizing space.

Given the accelerating pace of events in the information age that are impacting on EU Member States (MS), the European Union (EU) is seeking to become institutionally more agile and responsive to the velocity of 21st century foreign policy requirements. These challenges include: the euro zone struggle; the dramatic political developments in North Africa and the Middle East; growing irritants connected with the rise of China; and maintaining Russia on a course of democracy and reform, to name a few. Space represents a powerful enabler to meet these evolving requirements which are increasingly unfolding in "real time". Specifically, space can serve as an important "multiplier" to advance the six areas of sustainability addressed in this paper (i.e. security, energy, environment, resources, knowledge and mobility). Sustainable development has been recognised as a key element for the proper functioning of the Earth's environment, resource management, and human well-being.

These aspirations are outlined in the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) and "Europe 2020" strategy. For its part, European Space Policy (ESP) emphasizes the connectivity between space capabilities and the EU's ability to exercise influence regionally and globally. It is now well-understood that space systems are a strategic asset for any nation, or group of nations, with global ambitions. Accordingly, the paper first provides an overview of the challenges and opportunities related to the EU's multifaceted foreign policy. It then examines Europe as a group of space-faring nations with global reach. The second part delineates key foreign policy objectives in each of the six areas identified and how these areas can benefit from available space systems and derived applications and services. In the concluding section, the study analyses how cooperation in space can serve to promote Europe's political, economic and geostrategic objectives and bolster the prospects for success in achieving them.