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TURKEY'S STRATEGIC ROLE IN SPACE: HIGHLIGHTS FROM NATIONAL SPACE RESEARCH  
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**Abstract**

Over the last 50 years and especially with the new century, the importance given on space has been increased by countries and space dream came to the reality. Space is now more userfriendly for communities and more inside in the RealWorld. Today, most of countries, in particular in space powers and in the emerging powers devote major resources to their space activities. The efforts on international cooperation, the new opportunities of peaceful competition given to the societies, the new concepts that space has been used, very well understood by almost all sectors of the World. In parallel, the interest and investments in Turkey has been constantly increasing. The motivation and the improving abilities and capabilities of the institutions and corporations are very high and having positive impacts. On the other side, Turkey is a country with a rapid rate of change in many aspects such as with its growing economy (the 15th largest economy in the world), professional labor forces, well educated young population, and large development projects etc. These changes also bring complex problems to the country's management system. To become a player on the world space scene, In 2004 Turkey has taken an important leap decision under the custody of Prime Ministry to invest its resources on Space RD towards reaching high development standards for the country's future. The main goal of this paper is to discuss Turkey's strategic role in space. It also investigates whether or not space is a driving factor for the development of Turkey. An updated information on Turkey's space activities and its potential with industry and RD capability is presented here. The promising developments are underlined from the National Space Research Program of Turkey. The ultimate aim of this program is to establish Turkey's Space Research and Development Infrastructure and to take the continuous, advanced and unique precautions in order to create the necessary national mechanisms to secure and improve this infrastructure.