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Regional cooperation in space: policies, governance and legal tools (1)

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BULDING INNOVATIVE COOPERATION STRATEGIES FOR SPACE DEVELOPMENT IN THE  
CENTRAL AMERICAN REGION FROM A NGO: THE CASE OF ACAE

**Abstract**

The Central American Association for Aeronautics and Space (ACAE, in Spanish) is a non-profit organization which leads the efforts to introduce the Central American region in the world's technological paradigm of aerospace development. Its vision is to inspire the Central American talent to participate in the aerospace field. ACAE works with governments, private sector and academic institutions, through initiatives such the development of the aerospace related law framework, promotion of research, generation of innovative projects as well as education and diffusion of space sciences.

Since 2010, the association has been working intensively with decision-makers firstly in Costa Rica and more recently in other Central American countries, with the purpose to identify the most relevant necessities that are affecting the region in order to develop a common and tailored space policy program. Although since the foundation of ACAE relevant successes in the development of space activities in Central America have been reached, there are many issues to tackle in order to ensure an effective integration of policies and legislation among the countries.

This paper will summarize the state of the art of space development in Central America (government's program, the role played by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and other international cooperation), the achievements made during 2016 and will describe the most important challenges to discuss in the upcoming years.