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

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CONTRIBUTION OF SPACE ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOPMENT OF GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Abstract

The concept of mankind has often been subject to debates when discussing outer space activities. Space treaties point out to astronauts as to envoys of mankind and based on provisions in the Outer Space Treaty it has been generally recognized that outer space itself and celestial bodies are common heritage of mankind. Yet mankind still remains something that is not defined or understood easily and universally in the world, especially from the perspective of international law or international relations studies. In a time of ongoing globalization processes, research in international relations studies has touched upon such issues, which eventually lead to formation of several novel concepts such as world society or world polity. The fact remains, that during ongoing globalization, individuals, states or other kinds of specifically framed societies are being supplemented to some extent by a collective mentality of mankind. This collective mentality promotes mutual trust, deeper economic ties and cooperation in security-related affairs. In general, it could be even argued that it reduces the number of conflict in the world, in other words promotes peace. If we trust and know better each other and share common values and identity (which is not necessarily threatening our national identities), we will tend to avoid conflict situations based on clash of values, identities and lack of information. In this sense it is thus worth to use international relations and sociology based approaches to analyze to what extent is or could outer space activities be essential to further deepen and strengthen this global collective mentality and how can it advance progress in creating a world society and not just a society of states. Building on concrete examples, it can be argued that the influence of outer space on global mentality has been a positive one. Successful large format space exploration projects or just images of Earth from space and astronauts floating in orbits send a powerful message. In this regard, the research question I focus on in this article is whether outer space has achieved and finished its historical role in development of single world society and global collective mentality or if it could be still being utilized in this regard. If so, then it is necessary to identify proper methods how to utilize this special potential of space activities to contribute to cognitive and societal shifts towards global community and common humanity.