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International Cooperation - a cornerstone of 50 years UN Space Law and space diplomacy (1)

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RE-AFFIRMING EUROPE'S AMBITIONS IN SPACE: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE  
PERSPECTIVES

**Abstract**

Space is part of everyday life of the European citizens. Europe needs to unleash its full potential as an enabler in pushing the frontiers of knowledge, stimulating jobs and sustainable growth, supporting decision and policy making, providing socioeconomic benefits, and inspiring and motivating the next generations. On 26 October 2016, the European Union (EU) and European Space Agency (ESA) jointed forces and signed a Joint Statement on 'Shared Vision and Goals for the Future of Europe in Space', demonstrating their commitment to further strengthen their cooperation. The common European vision is that Europe remains a world-class actor in space and a partner of choice on the international scene. By 2030, Europe should be able to fully benefit from its space solutions to implement its policies, to strengthen European values and security, improve knowledge and foster prosperity. The goals identified for the years to come are to: maximise the integration of space into European society and economy; foster a globally competitive European space sector; and ensure European autonomy in accessing and using space in a safe and secure environment. This joint statement will be the overarching guiding principles for Europe's engagement in space for the next decade. The European Commission has been using the shared vision and goals as high level policy guiding elements in preparing the EC Communication on its space strategy published on the same day as the joint statement. Equivalently, ESA during the 2016 Council at ministerial level put forward the proposal "Towards Space 4.0 for a United Space in Europe". This paper will provide an overview of the past, present and future perspectives of space policy developments in Europe and the Member States.