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

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AN AFRICAN COUNTRY FIRST SATELLITE AND SPACE STRATEGY: THEIR ROLE IN
ADDRESSING GLOBAL SOCIETAL CHALLENGES THROUGH OUTER SPACE

Abstract

Outer space plays a central role in addressing worldwide challenges ranging from migration, security and defence to communications, management of natural resources and disaster mitigation. Successful approaches to technology and scientific developments aimed at using outer space to address global challenges require however policy approaches that take into consideration such global challenges. In this scope, even national space strategies shall be designed to cover worldwide needs, as Earth is increasingly without borders and facing common hurdles. This paper will analyse the role of national space policies and activities in addressing global challenges, whilst at the same time propose recommendations to guarantee that national space approaches are not siloed but, on the contrary, are integrated in common international and regional approaches to outer space. For this purpose, the approach taken by Angola, a West African country, will be given as an example. Angola launched its first satellite (a communications satellite called Angosat-1) in December 26, 2017. The launch of the satellite is the first most visible initiative of the Angolan Space Strategy 2016-2025, published in May 2017. The Strategy highlights Angosat-1 as one of the main reasons for structuring Angolan's space ambitions through a Space Strategy, a goal established as early as 2008, when a Government Resolution established the need to set up a satellite telecoms infrastructure in the country. This paper will go through the several plans, strategies and initiatives that addressed outer space even before the Space Strategy was approved, as well as look at the Vision, Mission and the pillars of the Strategy: space infrastructure, capacity-building promotion, industry technology, international positioning and organization cooperation. The paper will also analyse the first three priority space projects for the country (the Angosat-1, the Angolan Centre for Space Studies and the creation of a Space Agency) and explain in detail the approach, characteristics and scope of Angosat-1. By going through the main initiatives of Angola in outer space, this paper will investigate their role in contributing to worldwide efforts addressing global challenges through outer space, examine their synergies with the African Space Policy and Strategy approved in 2016, and determine the international and cooperation venues the country can explore. By means of analysing Angolan space activities and goals, this paper will show that an effective response to global challenges through outer space requires a worldwide and cooperative vision when defining and executing national space activities.