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IISL COLLOQUIUM ON THE LAW OF OUTER SPACE (E7)
National space law developments with particular focus on the Middle East region (5)

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ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE SPACE AGENCY: FROM TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT TO POLICY LEGISLATION

Abstract

In August 2019, the Philippines formally enacted Republic Act 11363, also known as the Philippine Space Act, thereby officially creating the Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA). The Act concurrently established the Philippine Space Development and Utilization Policy (PSDUP), which serves as the country's primary strategic roadmap for space development for the next decade. This makes the Philippines the most recent emerging space nation and one of the few nations to establish a national space law right from the very beginning of its space program. This paper outlines the history of space development in the Philippines and the various strategies taken to hasten the creation of PhilSA. It includes the various efforts done since 2012-13 including baseline research studies, capacity-building activities, technology-transfer agreements and multi-sectoral consultations with government, academe, industry and defense sectors. It also highlights the need for a holistic, inclusive and comprehensive space development plan that includes various strategic roadmaps for the future. The paper also tackles the efforts on how to address the gap between scientists, policy makers and legislators that led to the rapid legislation of PhilSA and PSDUP. It also outlines the framework of the partnerships undertaken by the Philippines as part of its space capacity-building measures, as well as taking into account recent technological and geopolitical developments in space science, technology and security. These efforts have placed the Philippines as a country geared up towards having a sustainable space program that combines established space activities with new space developments, making it unique among emerging space nations. Finally, the paper discusses how the experience of the Philippines in establishing its space agency and policy can be beneficial to other emerging space nations. With sharing the best practices and experience of the Philippines, it is hoped that other nations will follow suit in establishing their own national space programs in a logical and comprehensive manner, thereby leading to becoming responsible space actors in the future.