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AFRICAN NATIONS IN THE SPACE SECTOR: EXPLORING PRIORITIES ACROSS THE SPACE
VALUE CHAIN

Abstract

African nations are making significant strides in the space sector, demonstrating a huge commitment in their increasing investments in satellites for communications and Earth observations, as well as the establishment of astronomical observatories and spaceports. These endeavors are aimed at both enhancing capacity in space science and fostering growth in the African space economy. Nevertheless, there are emerging concerns within and outside the continent on the direction the African space players are taking to take the most of the New Space Economy and addressing the public priority it is receiving, given developmental priorities in Africa. This article examines the strategic directions being pursued by emerging African space nations, with a focus on positioning their initiatives along the space value chain. This research work employs a qualitative approach to assess the strategic directions of emerging African space nations. The analysis involves a literature review, interviews, and case studies to understand the motivations, challenges, and outcomes of various space initiatives in Africa. Interviews with key stakeholders such as government officials, space agency representatives, industry experts, and academics are intended to gather insights into their perspectives and experiences. The discussion delves into the implications and potential challenges associated with these strategic directions, considering the broader context of developmental priorities in Africa. In conclusion, African nations are encouraged to carefully assess their priorities in the space sector and to strengthen international partnerships. By internalizing relevant expertise and supporting regional initiatives, they can minimize domestic costs while maximizing the equitable distribution of space technology benefits across the continent.