Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: European Space Policy

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On 26 April 2007 the Commission decided to consult the European Economic and Social Committee, under Article 262 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, on the

Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: European Space Policy

The Section for Single Market, Production and Consumption, which was responsible for preparing the Committee's work on the subject, adopted its opinion on 31 January 2008. The rapporteur was **Mr Van Iersel**.

At its 442nd plenary session, held on 13 and 14 February 2008 (meeting of 13 February 2008), the European Economic and Social Committee adopted the following opinion by 145 votes to 1 with 4 abstentions.

1. **Conclusions and recommendations**

1.1 For strategic reasons, political and economic, the EESC is explicitly in favour of independent European access to space. It therefore endorses policies as outlined in documents of the Joint Space Council, the Commission and ESA ([1]) in April and May 2007.

1.2 A European Space policy should aim at peaceful objectives, including safeguarding collective security.

1.3 The EESC believes European space activities, be they conducted at national level, in an EU or an ESA frame, will generate visible benefits in various areas, such as scientific research, a desirable provision of infrastructure and data, and a broad range of economic applications as a result of the integration of space-based and ground-based systems.

1.4 So far the ESA concept has proved successful. Combining it with Commission activities is intended to, and will, release additional potential. This should be supplemented by processes to ensure coordination, definition of remits and calculation of cost-sharing between the Commission and the ESA.

1.5 Worldwide developments — US, Russia, Japan, China, India, which are also space-faring nations — force to even stronger action of Europe as competitor and partner in space. This requires the elaboration of concrete programmes at short notice and initiation of decision-making processes that can keep pace with decision-making by other world players.

1.6 At the same time, a faster, coordinated decision-making process would improve opportunities to define and, subsequently, realise missions in line with user needs.

1.7 GALILEO and GMES are European 'flagships'. The GALILEO programmes should be implemented without delay.

1.8 The insertion of 'space' into FP7 and Community policies must lead to an integral approach of all concerned DGs. Such broadening of the base for strategic thinking within the Commission will bring along a beneficiary effect on integral approaches at national level which are often lacking. A coordinated effort on this front is desirable.

1.9 All Member States, including the smaller ones and the new Member States, must benefit from the European space policy by creating sufficient opportunities for scientific competences as well as for highly qualified industrial capacities across Europe in both the upstream and downstream sector.

1.10 In ESA's industrial policy ([2]) of 'fair return' each country gets back its own investment via subscription and concession. As a consequence relations between governments, ESA, private companies and research institutes reflect deep-rooted patterns.

1.11 Up to now, the principle of fair return has been successful in developing European space capabilities. But the increasing maturity of the space market will require more flexibility, as fixed patterns of relationships are as a rule not conducive to industrial innovation. Due to market pull, user's needs and service developments, in particular SMEs, are expected to respond appropriately to the new requirements and options in European space policy.

1.12 On the other hand, sudden changes of fixed procedures and relationships can be counter-productive, also taking into account the large disparities between contributions to ESA.

1.13 Therefore the EESC advocates an open and transparent analysis and a dialogue on Europe's desirable performance in ten years time: which objectives and corresponding institutional tools — regarding ESA, Commission and Member States — are needed to fulfil a jointly coordinated European mission. Amongst others, the dialogue should include the way ESA is financed, the dynamic contribution of medium-sized companies, and the maintenance of the highest level of competition.

([1]) European Space Agency.

([2]) The ESA has its own industrial policy. Its form and content should not be confused with the sector-based industrial policy of the Commission.

1.14 In this respect the responsibility of the Commission for applications and the promotion of users' needs is crucial. The EESC trusts the Commission guarantees open discussions and involvement of the private sector, in particular SMEs.

1.15 The EESC agrees with the Council on the significance of space for defence and security. A push should be given to plan future systems that bring European countries together.

1.16 As the boundaries between civil and military applications are blurring, full use should be made of so-called dual-use effects.

1.17 Finally, communication is crucial. The EESC is of the opinion that the daily-life benefits of space should be better communicated.

1.18 A well targeted communication on European Space policy should foster positive incentives to youngsters regarding this sector, and should, more generally, enhance the attractiveness for young people to enter into scientific and/or technical education.

2. **A new approach towards a European Space Policy**

2.1 During the last decade the European Institutions and national task forces have increasingly dealt with the debate on new steps regarding the future of a European Space policy.

2.2 In April 2007 the Commission published in close cooperation with ESA ([3]) a Communication on space policy ([4]), an accompanying impact assessment and an extensive programme of intended actions by ESA, Commission and Member States.

2.3 On 22 May 2007 the Space Council ([5]) adopted a Resolution on the European Space Policy, based on the Communication of the Commission.

2.4 This enhanced interest, as illustrated in abovementioned documents, is stimulated by a wide variety of global developments and European strategic aims:

— the potential of the use of space-based services both for all sorts of issues and as a tool for a wide range of European policies, such as environment, security, transport, research, development aid, cohesion and education, all these in addition to research;

— the ongoing necessity for Europe to have an independent access to space as a prerequisite for a European Space Policy;

— a growing number of (emerging) world players in this field and the need for Europe to be a full player both as a partner and as a competitor;

— space as a source of innovation, industrial competitiveness and economic growth;

— reinforcement of scientific infrastructure; knowledge-based society and Lisbon objectives;

— the need to link European research to applications;

— the contribution and complementary role of space-technology to earth-based technologies and applications;

— the significance of space to European defence and security;

— the blurring boundaries between civil and military applications of space technologies;

— the awareness that single Member States are not able to meet the necessary requirements of a credible space policy; and consequently;

— the need to clearly define tasks and mandates of European Institutions and organisations as regards space.

2.5 In 2003 and 2004 the European Commission presented a Green and a White Paper on Space Policy. In both papers the outlines of a future space policy became manifest. They contained many elements — sometimes far-reaching — which are elaborated in the aforementioned Communication.

2.6 In its Resolution of 22 May the Council confirmed that the space sector 'is a strategic asset contributing to the independence, security and prosperity of Europe and its role in the world'. Intensifying European cooperation for the delivery of space-based services to the benefit of citizens is a key issue. The Council linked space policy to the Lisbon strategy and underlined its relevance to the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

2.7 The Council's Resolution stresses the goal of the build-up of the European Research Area and reaffirms the cooperation between ESA and the Commission which will foster efficiency, increased funding of European programmes, and more cohesion between technology and application. The ESA-Commission relationship will evolve through experience-based evidence. However, the question of co-financing of existing basic infrastructure (Kourou, Darmstadt) remains open.

2.8 A central issue is the cooperation and the division of labour between ESA and the Commission. ESA is leading in exploration and technology, the Commission will be responsible for applications which are related to its own policies such as transport, environment, security and relations with third countries as well as for the identification of non government users' needs for improved services.

([3]) The ESA (European Space Agency) is a completely independent organisation. It currently has 17 Member States. Not all ESA Member States are members of the EU, and not all EU Member States are members of the ESA. The ESA is jointly financed by these Member States and has a mandatory programme and optional programmes.

([4]) COM(2007) 212 final.

([5]) The Space Council is the Joint Space Council, a fusion between the Competitiveness Council and the intergovernmental Space Council for decision-making on ESA policies.

2.9 Cost-efficiency in public sector programmes will contribute to the competitiveness of private industrial and commercial companies. In particular SMEs and the supplier industry are important. At the same time the Council recognises ESA's industrial policy, in particular its 'fair return' principle, as an instrument to motivate investment and enhance European competitiveness.

2.10 Undeniably, the Resolution of last May introduces a new stage that was exuberantly welcomed by the leading actors ([6]).

3. **General remarks**

3.1 The world of space is changing fast. During the last decade the EESC has positively welcomed the Commission's Green and the White Papers on space policy ([7]). Again, the EESC strongly endorses the new steps of the Council, the Commission and ESA last May. It is symbolic that the breakthroughs regarding space policy are taking place at the beginning of the 21st century. A new era starts.

3.2 Worldwide developments in space have an increasingly strategic and technological impact.

3.2.1 Space policy is unmistakably becoming more important, if not indispensable, to contribute to earth-bound objectives, in other words, space applications are of vital importance to realise economic and societal goals for an integrating Europe.

3.2.2 In science and research progress on astronomy and planetary research is manifest. ESA benefits from existing networks. It adds with focussed programmes and peer reviews. As opposed to the scientific world the military sector is still nation-based.

3.2.3 Strategically, Europe has to safeguard its independence vis-à-vis the US and Russia, and, increasingly, China and India, and other space-faring nations, which are all at the same time competitor and partner in space. More generally, the position of Europe in the world should be the point of departure for any space policy.

3.3 The Resolution of the Space Council of 22 May 2007, and the accompanying documents such as the Commission's Communication 2007, its impact assessment, the statement by the Director-general of ESA, and the preliminary elements of a common European programme covering ESA, the Commission and the Member States are a big step forward, when one keeps in mind that:

— from the outset the rules of the Internal Market were not applied to space as a consequence of national strategic concepts, programmes, and military needs;

— there were substantial differences between national interests, financial commitments, technological objectives and industrial performances, and

— accordingly, separate national industrial patterns are often prevailing.

3.4 The Framework Agreement of 2003 ([8]) between ESA and the European Union laid the foundation of convergent planning and actions in the EU and ESA. Now, the Council formulates a global approach aiming at better coordinating and enhancing the efficiency of individual projects, be they national, intergovernmental or European.

3.5 In the view of the EESC, among important elements are the growing consensus and common vision between Member States; the confirmation of the cooperation between the Commission and ESA and a division of responsibility between these two bodies, providing the basis for increased EU funding; a better balance between R&D and applications, and, most importantly, the explicit intention to put users' needs in front; public private partnerships; and the priorities — 'flagships' — of GALILEO and GMES ([9]) within the framework of a European space policy.

3.6 It has to be noted, though, that the intended steps are part of a lengthy process that certainly is not yet in its final phase. Concrete projects and funding flows have still to be worked out.

3.7 The total budget 2005 of space activities of ESA, EUMETSAT and the Member States came to EUR 4.8 bn. (excl. the EC) ([10]). The EC will dedicate a guaranteed sum of over EUR 1.4 bn (2007-2013) to space applications and activities through its FP7 programme. Worldwide space budgets come to EUR 50 bn. The US's budget is roughly EUR 40 bn. of which more than 50 % is military. Moreover, American expenditure is driven by an all-American concept which has its effects on the cooperation between the various institutions and business ([11]). Above all, the US is a closed market which is large enough to support US space industry without having it to compete successfully on the international commercial market.

([6]) Amongst others the Press releases of the European Commission and of ESA regarding the results of the Space Council of 22 May are headings as follows: 'Space Council welcomes historic European Space Policy', and 'Europe's Space Policy becomes a reality today'.

([7]) EESC Opinion on the Communication from the Commission 'The European aerospace industry: meeting the global challenge', (Rapporteur: Mr. Sepi), OJ C 95, 30.3.1998, p. 11.
EESC Opinion on the Green Paper on European Space Policy (Rapporteur: Mr. Buffetaut), OJ C 220, 16.9.2003, p. 19.
EESC Opinion on the White Paper 'An action plan for implementing the European Space Policy' (Rapporteur: Mr. Buffetaut), OJ C 112, 30.4.2004, p. 9.

([8]) The EC-ESA Framework Agreement, October 2003, introduces a working method and a closer relationship between ESA and the Commission.

([9]) Global Monitoring for Environment and Security.

([10]) ESA EUR 2 485 mln, EUMETSAT EUR 330 mln, Member States (France, Germany, Italy, Spain) EUR 1 190 mln (civil) and EUR 790 mln (military).

([11]) On the other hand, the efficiency of a common American concept and a central organisation must not be exaggerated. The individual states and the companies, each with their own representatives on Capitol Hill and their own lobbies and networks, influence the pattern of contracts and objectives. NASA also suffers from bureaucracy and from being a monopoly.

3.8 European space activities are a mix of European (intergovernmental or communal) and national programmes. ESA is doing more than just coordinating projects and has so far proved extraordinarily successful; the ESA is an R&D Agency developing large successful infrastructures at European level. The large European operators of the ESA in space include: Arianespace, EUMETSAT, Eutelsat. Besides these programmes some Member States have their own programmes based on national political and technological traditions and objectives, and, accordingly, on national capacities, networks and applications. The European pattern consists of a complicated system of common and national programmes.

3.9 It is likely that new Member States will join ESA which would raise the number of member countries from 17 to 22 ([12]). Benefits should be drawn from existing scientific competences and from the potential reinforcement of economic clusters.

3.10 Overlap between national programmes and ESA is quite possible. Defence driven projects have so far remained largely national. This can also create inefficiencies because of the blurring of boundaries between technologies for military and civil objectives. The new global approach may help to foster convergence.

3.11 The budgets are related to infrastructure and data collection. The better the relationship with business and market forces is organised the more extensive multiplier effects through applications and services. In this respect EUMETSAT (the operator for meteorological satellites) is an illustrative example. It may provide a very useful model for other sectors.

3.12 Given budgetary constraints it is wise that Europe is focussing on priorities and is fully open to international cooperation. International cooperation has a great added value with sometimes impressive multiplier effects. However, to step in as equal partner with third countries Europe's capacities also need to meet sufficient basic requirements besides the priorities. It is desirable that such requirements are commonly agreed upon, and that, subsequently, sufficient investments are made.

3.13 In a recently published Opinion, the EESC fully endorses GALILEO, a European global navigation project ([13]). GALILEO will guarantee more accurate timing positioning and timing data worldwide for civil applications in a broad field of areas. It is comparable to the existing American GPS, but it will also add to it.

3.13.1 GALILEO will confirm the European position as an independent player in space.

3.13.2 There was no satisfactory business case for the upstream sector. The EESC welcomes the decision of the Council to fund GALILEO and the definition of the programmes. These programmes should be implemented without delay in order to create favourable conditions for the downstream sector ([14]).

3.13.3 Apart from the obstacles for a viable public private partnership which is generally a complicated affair anyway, there are a number of other open questions which are urgently to be solved in order to achieve an effective involvement of private partners.

3.14 In addition to existing services GMES will provide an increasingly indispensable coherent set of earth-observation based services. It will 'improve Europe's monitoring and assessment capacity in environment and contribute to addressing security needs' ([15]). Dynamic worldwide developments show to what extent new tools are desirable to address new challenges of environment, climate change, health, and personal and collective security.

3.14.1 These challenges concern a very broad range of areas, from natural disasters and crises to climate change impacts as gas emissions and air pollution, and to civil protection and border control.

3.14.2 The relevant applications in this field are user' driven — with users coming from very varying communities representing policymakers, public services, companies and citizens — which underlines the need for increased coordination between ESA, the Commission and the Member States, and the desirability of a collection of the needs by the EC.

3.14.3 GMES services will benefit the development and implementation of various EU policies. Given the expected added value of GMES, the budget (2009) must provide operational funding for services and space applications to support EU-policies.

3.14.4 Also in the case of GMES infrastructure it is governmental responsibility to collect data in a reliable and sustainable way. Subsequently, conditions have to be created for participation of private business.

3.15 GALILEO, GMES and the other programmes all illustrate that space policy is becoming operational and supportive to ongoing technological performances and applications which will help to use new methods of analysis, anticipation and solution of societal issues.

([12]) Including the participation of two non-EU countries, Switzerland and Norway.

([13]) EESC Opinion on the Green Paper on Satellite Navigation Applications (Rapporteur: Mr Buffetaut), CESE 989/2007 (not yet published in the Official Journal). The opinion is discussing amongst others a number of aspects which according to the EESC should have been addressed by the Green Paper.

([14]) In that perspective a new development is that the European — downstream — industry is bundling its views in 'Galileo Services (GS)' and in the European Association for Remote Sensing Companies (EARSC).

([15]) Communication on European Space Policy, page. 6.

3.16 It is important that all Member States, including the smaller and the new Member States, benefit from European space policy. A commitment of all Member States is also in the common interest of the Union as such.

3.17 The new Member States will certainly profit from applications. Moreover, opportunities should be created for them to bring in their existing scientific competences and their highly qualified industrial capacities in order to strengthen their potentialities.

4. **Governance**

4.1 The Space Council met for the first time in November 2004 to discuss and to promote European convergence and Europe-based programmes. The EESC hopes and trusts that the guidance given by the Council last May creates the desirable context for a space policy which is in accordance with the European ambitions.

4.2 Better institutional provisions are always indispensable for progress. In this respect the EESC welcomes the increasing involvement of the Council and the Commission in space matters as well as the foreseen well defined cooperation and division of responsibility between ESA and the Commission.

4.3 The Space Council creates the desirable platform for discussion on intergovernmental and community-related approaches, which will have to be connected effectively.

4.4 The insertion of 'space' into Community policies and FP7 with a special chapter Space Policy must be made visible through the intended engagement of all concerned DGs. This integral engagement will broaden also the base for strategic thinking. In this regard the specific EU competence for Space in the new Treaty will certainly be helpful.

4.5 The legal order, often overlooked, requires specific attention. In a 'single-state' context like the US the existing legal order is a natural framework for concrete activities and accompanying regulation. By contrast, in the complicated European context — ESA, Commission, sovereign Member States — a well-structured legal order is lacking which is counter-productive. Taken into account the extension of space-related activities in the EU a coherent and logical legal/institutional framework will become all the more indispensable.

4.6 The Commission's responsibility for applications and the involvement of various DGs will positively influence the discussion and cooperation with the private sector. It will open new avenues for user driven projects.

4.7 A specific aspect to be mentioned is the provision in the New Treaty concerning the link between the High Representative for Foreign Affairs in the Council and the vice-Chairmanship of the Commission, which will be united in one person.

4.8 One of the main rationales for a European Space Policy is that strategic thinking by the Commission will also bring along a beneficiary effect on integral approaches at national level which is often lacking. The involvement of DGs of the Commission will also foster networks with (potential) users in the national administrations.

4.9 For the same reason the establishment of a GMES-Bureau within DG Enterprise in charge of coordination is most welcome.

4.10 The involvement of the Commission gives space policy a place amidst the other Community policies. This will help to improve the image of the benefits of 'space' to the citizens.

4.11 Hitherto the world of 'space' has been too isolated and not well communicated. Effective communication by the Commission and the Council should emphasise the implications of 'space' for society. A well targeted communication should also include positive incentives to youngsters regarding space and, more generally, incentives to enter into scientific and/or technical education.

4.12 The EESC underlines the great importance of a systematic and overall transparent evaluation and a correct implementation. The complex relationship between research centres, public authorities in the EU and the Member States, and private business, together with the complicated financial and organisational arrangements, requires monitoring. In a dynamic interaction effective monitoring will lead to transparency, and possibly to simplification and to new views and projects, as well as their financing.

5. **Fair return and private sector**

5.1 Strategic concepts and programmes in Member States, specific national relationships with private companies, intergovernmental cooperation in and beyond the EU, and technology-driven ESA as an intergovernmental Agency explain the principle 'fair return': each country gets back its own investment in ESA-activities under the form of contracts to its industry via a complicated pattern of subscription and concession. Under the actual circumstances ESA's industrial policy is successful.

5.2 Consequently, relations between governments, research institutes, ESA and private companies reflect deep-rooted patterns, also because the space sector is a circumscribed and highly specialised market.

5.3 Decisive developments are to be taken into account:

— the need for strengthening European presence in the world;

— the use of the 'universe' for civil needs and peaceful objectives, including collective security;

— the political and financial participation of the EU and the Commission in a broad range of areas;

— the increased emphasis on application and users' needs, the switch from technology push to market pull;

— the changing role of private business.

5.4 The Council advocates the continuation of the 'fair return' principle in the case of ESA. In this respect the interests of the ESA-Member States do not coincide in all dimensions. It has to be noted that the 'fair return' principle has already evolved through a more flexible approach than was usual before, and that it is gradually modernised. In the view of the EESC, this principle should, first and foremost, become sufficiently flexible to allow (still) country-based highly qualified medium-sized companies to become appropriately involved.

5.5 In case of participation of and funding by the Commission the EU-rules prevail, i.e. competition policy and the rules on Public procurement. The EESC also welcomes the fact that the Commission is developing appropriate tools and funding rules for Community measures on space, with due consideration for the specific nature of the space sector, allowing Member States to have a balanced sectoral structure for space.

5.6 An important point of attention is the role of SMEs in developing services. A distinction must be made between big, often internationally operating, companies and a large number of specialised mostly country-based medium-sized companies looking for opportunities in European space. Consortia of SMEs in space need support.

5.6.1 The role of specialised medium-sized companies is increasing anyhow ([16]). This will probably be all the more so in this sector due to the emphasis on market pull and users' needs and a dynamic involvement of smaller companies in service development. Operational planning and projects in cooperation with medium-sized companies will become more usual.

5.6.2 Up till now space policy was largely separated from other parts of the economy. The switch in emphasis, the horizontal approach, and the cooperation between ESA and the Commission will contribute to link technology, public investments and private business. The experience of EUMETSAT with its development of operational services can be of practical value for GMES.

5.6.3 As concerns satellites business planning, marketing and commercialisation may introduce beneficial practices. Networks with medium-sized companies will be intensified.

5.7 Space-based and ground-based systems should be integrated as is foreseen for GMES. Intelligent sensor networks can be further developed.

5.8 Involvement of industry requires a precise definition of EU demand. The increased emphasis on services and users' needs besides research, data collection and infrastructure implies a constant fine-tuning between science and application across Europe ([17]).

5.9 However, as noted earlier, applications require underpinning technological development. Among others, the ESTP ([18]), bringing together scientific and industrial actors, is a very promising platform for the identification of the desirable technologies. It is expected to set the long-term Strategic Research Agenda. ESTP can also provide links with other industrial fields and areas.

5.10 Up to now, the principle of fair return has been successful in developing European space capabilities. But the increasing maturity of the space market will require more flexibility, as fixed patterns of relationships are as a rule not conducive to industrial innovation. Due to market pull, user's needs and service developments, in particular SMEs, are expected to respond appropriately to the new requirements and options in European space policy.

5.10.1 In this respect the large disparities between national contributions to ESA, in particular in case of the new Member States and the smaller countries, as well as non-EU countries (belonging to the ESA), have also to be taken into account.

5.11 Therefore the EESC advocates an open and transparent analysis and a dialogue on Europe's desirable performance in ten years time in order to preserve and improve its position in the world: which objectives and corresponding institutional tools — regarding ESA, Commission and Member States — are needed to fulfil a jointly coordinated European mission, including a dynamic contribution of medium-sized companies and guaranteeing the highest level of competition.

5.12 Such analysis and dialogue should also include the way ESA is financed, in particular the effect of the optional contributions, and how procedures and progress in integrating the use of space services in the EU internal market can be foreseen. In the areas where the DGs of the Commission will be involved, special funding rules and cost-sharing calculations should be drawn up.

([16]) See in this respect the EESC opinion on the Value and supply chain development in a European and global context (Rapporteur: Mr van Iersel), CESE 599/2007.

([17]) *'… we can no longer pursue the double monologue of industry inviting institutions to define their needs and institutions inviting industry to propose services meeting their needs.'* See letter of ASD-Europspace, 20 July 2007 to Commissioner G. Verheugen and Mr J.J. Dordain, ESA.

([18]) European Space Technology Platform, a combined platform of the major stakeholders, including: the participating countries in EU, ESA, European Space Industry (over 100 companies) and Eurospace, Research Laboratories and Universities, and National Space Agencies and 21 Organisations.

5.13 Modern sector-based industrial policy as it is developed for various sectors by the Commission can also be of help, taking into account the specific characteristics of space. Among these are the need for publicly financed technologies and infrastructure, the development of prototypes, the absence of a real market in various segments, and the active government-led and –financed space related industrial policy in the US and elsewhere.

5.14 As a first step a concretisation of the policymakers' views of the industrial ambitions of Europe is urgently needed towards industry.

6. **Defence and Security**

6.1 The Council's Resolution underlines the significance of space for defence and security. A common strategy concerning European military capabilities is debated increasingly.

6.2 This debate fits in the desirable progress of a common foreign and security policy. The EESC welcomes the gradually accepted conclusion that security should no longer be a single policy, but a mix of policies of and within the European Institutions ([19]).

6.3 It has also to be kept in mind that the boundaries between civil and military applications are blurring. It is recommendable to highlight the possible reciprocal opportunities for the sets of requirements in both sectors. Military systems may profit from civil European missions due to the dual-use effect of civil and military applications.

6.4 At the moment ownership, governance and budgets in the field of security are strictly national. Synergic approaches among different countries are rare, although some actions in the sector defence are coordinated in a European framework. There are several options for the future, from a 'light' degree of European cooperation to a full-fledged common European model.

6.5 The EESC is of the opinion that for security, technological and budgetary reasons a push should be given to plan future systems that bring European countries together.

6.6 The national logic in security is deep-rooted. But starting with a common vision on the future, including also compelling global developments, concrete projects can be started and experience-based evidence may foster progress.

6.7 In order to avoid unnecessary duplications, specialisation and division of labour could be a part of this planning ([20]). Research programmes could be set up which help to develop technical capabilities.

6.8 In this respect EDA ([21]) as one of the actors can be given room to develop special competences such as defining capabilities, proposing development programmes and coordinating national Defence and Space Agencies and ESA.

6.9 The New Treaty holds also out prospects of broadening initiatives by the Commission and the Council to foster security research, although any consequent overlaps or duplication should be avoided.

6.10 Decisions of this nature require preparation and, subsequently, commitments by the Space Council and the General Council. Institutional improvements, introduced by the new Treaty, will be supportive.

Brussels, 13 February 2008.

The President

of the European Economic and Social Committee

Dimitris DIMITRIADIS

([19]) *'Today, space policy for security is not a single policy, but a mix of policies pursued by the MS, the Space Council, the Commission and eventually EDA. This composite panorama requires a better coordination to rationalise the governance and avoid duplications.'* See 'The Cost of Non Europe in the field of satellite based systems' FRS-IAI Report, Fondation Pour la Recherche Stratégique, Paris and Istituto Affari Internazionali, Roma, 24 May 2007.

([20]) A precursor is the MUSIS six-nations agreement, i.e. Multinational Space-based Imaging system for Surveillance, reconnaissance and observation.

([21]) European Defence Agency.