



Minutes of the Launch Meeting of
the New Working Group on Space Policy of Thursday, 2 April 2009 on

PERSPECTIVES FOR THE EUROPEAN SPACE POLICY

Chaired by Etelka BARSÍ-PATAKY MEP

Introduction by

- Etelka BARSÍ-PATAKY MEP

Speaker:

- Daniel SACOTTE, Director Advisor to the Director General, European Space Agency (ESA)
- Karl VON WOGAU MEP, Chairman of the Kangaroo Group, Chairman of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Security and Defence
- Bill NEWTON DUNN MEP, Vice-Chairman of the European Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control, Member of the European Parliament's Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection
- Margaritis SCHINAS MEP, Member of the European Parliament's Committee on Budgets

In her introductory note Mrs Barsi-Pataky encouraged the participants to actively join the newly established working group on space policy. She stressed that there is a need to start these activities in the European Parliament already in this parliamentary term, to promote the European space policy in several aspects. The Space Policy Working Group will include representatives of the public side (Parliament, Commission, European Space Agency, etc.) and the relevant industry, particularly developers, operators, service providers. Mrs Barsi-Pataky underlined that the group intends to incorporate ideas, expertise and political potential of MEPs from different EP Committees. She named key points relevant to future space policy.

Mr Sacotte highlighted that a strong space industry can strengthen the global political and technological role of Europe. Introducing the history of ESA he referred to the EC-ESA Framework Agreement of 2007 that established a new field for cooperation on institutional level. He stressed that Europe has to maintain its priority to strive for autonomous access to space. ESA is respected by key international partner institutions but it is necessary to look for a higher level of political visibility within Europe.

Mr Sacotte named four key areas relevant for future space policy: space and climate change, the space-relevance of the Lisbon Strategy, security and the exploration of space. He welcomed that with EGNOS the Community became the owner of an important infrastructure and at the same time it will have new responsibilities such as financial planning.

The preparation period for the next EU Financial Perspective beginning from 2013 is the right time to place space programmes and space infrastructure in the European budgetary framework.

The new Kangaroo working group will be an important forum for interactions between stakeholders and can be a good institutional example for the future, Sacotte concluded.

Mr von Wogau considered the agreement on the Galileo financing as a main achievement at the European Parliament. Also a significant step was that Galileo was made available for use under ESDP. Mr von Wogau underlined areas where space policy has direct security-relevance: satellite based Earth-observation, satellite-based telecommunications and finally space observation that will be an emerging field in the future. It is expected that the preliminary report on the implementation of the European Security Strategy will be available in June, which will serve as reference point for the continuation of work of the next legislative period.

Mr Newton Dunn referred to the origins of the Kangaroo Group and the EP's long term commitment in space policy. He highlighted that space activities have long-term results and returns and this should be considered as well during the decision-making process. There is a need that the EP manages getting its members more involved and it is a priority to gather new members in the next legislative work who can build up the working group for the next five years.



Mr Schinas stressed that it was the EP that made financing and restart of the Galileo programme possible. The additional financial instruments created should not mean however a blank cheque of taxpayers' money, i.e. the EP as budgetary authority has strong responsibilities on financing space policy. According to Schinas' forecast the planning of the EU budget is going to be easier from 2013 as there will be more exact estimations for the involvement of the private sector.

In the following discussion the participants reinforced the need for promoting space research as a priority. Representatives of downstream industry underlined that the industry requires its share from the benefits and business opportunities forecasted during the creation of the space programmes. Concerning international cooperation the role of the Ukraine and further of Russia and China was discussed. Although there are general good developments on international fields there are still sensitive issues in the relations with global partners.

In her concluding remarks Mrs Barsi-Pataky referred to the need for a possible vertical sub-committee in the future with the listing of new members to be involved. She underlined that an appropriate legal background can significantly contribute to an overall space policy. Finally she reminded that decision-makers will have to carry the responsibilities for the promises made for businesses on downstream markets.

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April 2009