

Preface Yearbook

Space, the Global Endeavour

The forces that shape and drive human activities in outer space have been changing since the dawn of spaceflight. Where it initially started out as a bipolar and geopolitical competition, space utilisation over time expanded both its scope and the players involved, embracing space exploration, space science and applications that constantly benefit millions of users worldwide.

Recently, we have entered a new phase where the opportunities ahead are great, but the challenges to live up to them equally so. A gradual but steady geopolitical shift – amplified by a financial and economic crisis – points towards a different balance of capabilities and power. This evolution has far-reaching influences on the different dimensions of outer space utilisation. As society requires evermore integrated technology application in a wide array of fields, it triggers the civil side to establish more cooperation to meet these demands. From a military perspective, the geopolitical shift introduces the challenge of a widening multi-actor system and more global interdependencies. In addition, existing issues, like the sustainable use of outer space, require ever more attention in order to be addressed in a timely and efficient manner. These processes sometimes push the current operation mode of the system to its limits, and – what is more – they will necessitate and drive substantial change in the medium to long term. It is for these reasons that the thematic title of this Yearbook highlights the global dimension of the space endeavour.

As in previous editions, this yearbook is comprised of three parts. The first part seeks to set out a comprehensive overview of the economic, political, technological and institutional trends that affect space activities. It was prepared in-house at ESPI and while its perspective is European, it also provides a comparative analysis of space efforts around the world.

The second part of the Yearbook brings together the views of nine distinguished experts in the space field. These experts touch topics or events which stirred the space sector in 2010, thus reflecting on the establishment of the UK Space Agency

and the formulation of a new German space strategy, but also on the usability of space data, intergovernmental cooperation and issues of sustainability such as balanced development and space debris.

An important milestone in the preparation of the Yearbook was again ESPI's Autumn Conference, where authors met for an exchange on the drafts of their contributions. Having taken place in Vienna in September 2011, it provided a forum for constructive exchange and coordination of the contributions.

The third part of the Yearbook carries forward the character of the Yearbook as an archive of space activities. Again prepared in-house by ESPI, a bibliography, chronology and data about institutions is provided where readers of the now five volumes of the Yearbook can identify statistical development and evolutions.

In closing, I would like to thank the contributors of the articles in Part II for their engagement in this publication, as well as the ESPI staff that has been instrumental in the Yearbook's production.

Peter Hulsroj

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The Forward Look

Hulsroj, P.; Pagkratis, S.; Baranes, B. (Eds.)

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