

**Joint Statement by the Space Policy Institute  
and the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI)  
on the Strategic Economic Importance of Space**

**Washington, DC/Vienna, 14 May 2009**

Investing in space activities is a promising element in dealing with the current economic crisis. This Joint Statement addresses the U.S. Office of Science and Technology Policy and the European Space Council, meeting in May 2009.

Space activities contribute to the long-term well being of society through improved scientific understanding in every field of knowledge, most notably with respect to the global environment. The design, development, and operation of space systems constitute major technical and managerial challenges in systems engineering and thus help strengthen the engineering capacities of participating nations.

Most immediately, space systems such as satellite communications, environmental monitoring, and global navigation satellite systems are crucial to the productivity of many types of national and international infrastructures such as air, sea, and highway transportation, oil and gas pipelines, financial networks, and global communications.

Information services enabled by the unique capabilities and global reach of space systems are crucial to the functioning of the global economy. In a time of global economic crisis, the United State, Europe, and other space-faring nations need to cooperate more closely to remove barriers to international trade and market-driven innovation, and to protect space systems from intentional or unintentional interference.

While each space-faring nation will need to individually assess which particular space activities and projects are most beneficial to its interests, we believe there are clear areas of common interest that support a common action agenda. The institutionalized EU-US space dialogue is an appropriate forum to proceed in this respect.

1. Protection of the radio spectrum used by space services from harmful interference, with special attention to safety services such as radionavigation satellite services and environmental services such as remote sensing. After space launch, communication is the most pervasive requirement for all space systems. Space-faring nations are encouraged to work through the Space Frequency Coordination Group and within the International Telecommunications Union to achieve international support for necessary protections.

2. Protection of the space environment and mitigation of orbital debris. Improving space situational awareness and reduction of the hazards posed by man-made orbital debris are both vital to the long-term sustainable use of space for all nations. Space-faring nations are encouraged to adhere to consensus orbital debris mitigation standard practices recognized by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

3. Improving space situational awareness should also be regarded as a promising area of European-US coordination and cooperation. In this context the proposal for a code of conduct or "rules of the road" for space traffic needs to be seriously considered.

4. Promotion of open, interoperable standards for space systems and their associated mission operations systems to increase opportunities for international collaboration in space. Space faring nations are encouraged to support space standards developed by the International Standards Organization and to utilize the Consultative Committee for Space Data Systems and the Interagency Operations Advisory Group to strengthen capabilities for cross support across the international space community and expand space communications and navigation interoperability. In addition, space agencies and industries should closely track the standards development work of terrestrial data communications standardization bodies in order to ensure compatibility of emerging commercial devices and services with current and future space needs.

5. Promotion of open international markets in space goods and services, and preventing the proliferation of ballistic missile technologies. International commercial competition in space goods and services is the most effective means for ensuring market-driven innovation and economic growth. Such commercial competition should not be deterred or constrained except when clearly necessary, such as for reasons of national security or public safety. Further international dialog is needed on appropriate government supports related to space transportation in recognition of the dual-use nature of the technology and sovereign interests in maintaining independent access to space.

6. Encouragement of international consultation on the development or modification of domestic regulations affecting any commercial space sector. Space commerce is an inherently global activity and greater transparency and insight into related regulations can help improve the efficiency and predictability

of global markets. International harmonization of domestic regulations avoids “flags of convenience.” In particular, care should be taken to avoid creating non-tariff and technical barriers to trade (e.g., proprietary standards or interface requirements for space services) that limit competition or undercut national treatment of any firm.

7. Encouragement of international cooperation through space projects that benefits all mankind, such as better understanding of the global environment and explorations beyond low Earth orbit into the solar system and beyond. Space applications can be effectively used to reach the Millennium Development Goals. Existing mechanisms such as the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites can be strengthened and existing approaches such as the Global Exploration Strategy provide a promising basis for identifying new opportunities. Projects that inspire new generations of scientists and engineers around the world to work together toward common goals also strengthen individual national capabilities to compete, innovate, and succeed in an increasingly challenging global economic environment.

In recognition of the strategic economic importance of space to the world:

- We need to promote the use of space for the benefit of economic and social development in the national as well as global context.
- We need to protect our critical space systems and services.
- We need to enact open trade and standards to cooperate and compete more effectively and efficiently.
- We need to encourage greater transparency in regulations and cooperative international projects that inspire the next generation of innovators.

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
THE ELLIOTT SCHOOL  
OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

**Space Policy Institute**

1957 E Street  
NW, Washington, DC 20052  
202-994-6240 (p)/202-994-0335 (f)  
E-mail: [elliott@gwu.edu](mailto:elliott@gwu.edu)  
[www.gwu.edu/~spi](http://www.gwu.edu/~spi)

 | **ESPI**  
European Space Policy Institute

Palais Fanto  
Schwarzenbergplatz 6  
(Entrance: Zaunergasse 1-3)  
A-1030 Vienna, Austria  
Tel +43 1 718 1118 -0 / Fax -99  
E-mail: [office@espi.or.at](mailto:office@espi.or.at)  
[www.espi.or.at](http://www.espi.or.at)