EDA & Space

Since the development of a European Space Policy in 2007, the role of space-based services for security and defence actors has been acknowledged as a priority. The Space Policy Resolution of the Council of November 2010 "invites the European Commission, the EU Council, assisted by EDA, together with Member States and ESA, to explore ways to support current and future capability needs for crisis management through cost-effective access to robust, secure and reactive space assets and services (integrating global satellite communications, Earth observation, positioning and timing), taking full advantage of dual-use synergies as appropriate. " The EU Council Conclusions of 31 May 2011 "Towards a space strategy for the European Union" further call for evaluating "the need for improvements of the available space infrastructure to develop secure services".

The inclusion of Space in the Capability Development Plan as a core enabler for defence-related capabilities illustrates the key importance of space-based services in support of a credible CSDP and Member States' ability to sustain a wide range of operations. Space-based assets are of direct relevance for the provision of critical information at strategic, tactical and operational level, communications as well as positioning, navigation and timing. Space-related activities are being conducted throughout EDA's Directorates, notably Capabilities, R&T and Armaments and do also support the Agency's effort in support of pooling and sharing and civil-military synergies.

Against this background, the European Defence Agency has been involved notably in the "Structured Dialogue on Space and Security", gathering the European Commission, the European External Action Service, the Council Secretariat General and the European Space Agency for regular exchange of views and coordination of respective space-related activities.

Noting the Agency's support to participating Member States in identifying defence requirements that could be met by space-based solutions, the Steering Board in Defence Ministers formation tasked the Agency to monitor and regularly report on latest developments linked to the space domain, taking part in relevant fora and, based on pMS guidance, promote the inclusion of security and defence aspects.

Taking account of growing interactions with the European Space Agency (ESA), the EDA Steering Board, in March 2010, further invited the Head of the Agency, Catherine Ashton, to conclude an Administrative Arrangement with ESA.

Administrative Arrangement EDA/ESA

On 20 June 2011, EDA Chief executive, Ms Claude-France Arnould, and the European Space Agency's Director General, Mr. Jean-Jacques Dordain, signed an Administrative Arrangement concerning the establishment of cooperation between the two Agencies.

The Administrative Arrangement concluded between the European Defence Agency and the European Space Agency foresees that their cooperation will involve in particular to :

- Identify those capability gaps or shortfalls that could be filled by space assets for the sustainable and effective implementation of the relevant EU policies.
- Investigate whether identified capability requirements can be shared and thus supported by both EDA and ESA;
- Coordinate research, technology and demonstration activities, including access to study results as appropriate and subject to their respective rules;
- Investigate synergies between existing dedicated EDA and ESA programmes and their future evolution;
- Explore synergies and coordinate activities in support of industrial competitiveness and European non-dependence issues.

Within the scope of this cooperation ESA and EDA may enter into implementing arrangements for specific projects in accordance with their respective rules and procedures. A first implementing arrangement will be concluded in the area of UAS Command and Control over Satellite for a joint demonstration mission. Other activities of common interest focus on:

- Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance,
- Civil-military synergies in Earth observation,
- Satellite communications,
- Space Situational Awareness,
- Critical space technologies for European non-dependence.