VIIth European Interparliamentary Space Conference (VIIth EISC), Paris 16 -18 June 2005

Europe's space activities have assumed a prominent role thanks both to technical and scientific accomplishments (Ariane 5, International Space Station ISS, Cassini/Huygens, Envisat, etc.), the development of major industrial poles of activity on a world scale, and political and financial commitment to major programs such as GALILEO and GMES that provide the European Union with effective strategic independence.

European Space policy is currently being elaborated by the European Commission, the European Space Agency and member states. After the 2nd. "Space Council" (7th of June 2005), the 3. "Space Council" (planned in November 2005) and the ESA-Council on Ministerial level (December 2005) an outline of the European Space Programme has to be agreed upon.

In parallel with the emergence of a strong independent European space program, major international co-operation is taking place in the area of environmental surveillance, as well as a major space exploration project due to be launched by the United States.

Permanent members of the European Interparliamentary Space Conference (EISC): Germany, Belgium, Spain, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom, have observed, after six years of uninterrupted work, the growing role of the EISC and national parliaments in the elaboration and implementation of European space policies that are sensitive to the common interests of the European Union and member states.

After seven years of building a European Space Policy between the member states, the European Space Agency, and the EU, there is a clear need for a strong and clear political and public financial commitment for increasing space policy objectives in Europe, especially at EU level, as far it is possible on the basis of present EU treaties.

Large scale space programmes and long term research are a main public infrastructure, driven by public policies. Space is for Europe a main sovereignty expression. Defining a budget priority for space in the EU 2007 – 2013 financial perspectives for serving EU sectorial policies is needed (Environment, Defence, Security, etc.).

Space applications have always benefited Europe's entire economy. But increasingly, business is cooperating not only in the exploitation of space programmes, but in their design and in their management. There are many models of public private partnership in space, models which should be actively encouraged, where appropriate.

The EISC wishes to encourage and participate in the construction of a competitive European space policy capable of providing a response to the requirements of European Union policy and taking ambitious initiatives in the area of international co-operation involving major space powers.

The EISC proposes for its VIIth conference adopting proposals in four major areas of the European space program:

I. Protecting the planet and protecting the citizen
II. Pursuing Space exploration
III. Strengthening industrial policy
IV. Encouraging the education and training of young persons in space activities

I. Protecting the planet and protecting the citizen

1. Considering that space resources represent a means of protecting European citizens against direct or indirect threats, both in the area of risks related to the environment (natural catastrophes) as well as those related to human activity (military aggression, terrorism, illegal immigration etc.),
2. Considering that Europe requires strategic space intelligence resources, for use in and to accelerate the implementation of its defence and security policy (CFSP, ESDP) currently under construction, 3. Recognising the interest that the European Union has in protecting the environment and encouraging sustainable development for the benefit of its citizens while respecting major international treaties on the environment,

4. Recalling that the European Union and the European Space Agency launched the GMES initiative in 2002 as a global surveillance system,

5. Recalling the conclusions of the third Earth Observation Summit held in Brussels in February 2005, establishing a general methodological and organisational framework named GEOSS (Global Earth Observation System of Systems) to make sure that the Earth Observation Systems respond to the need of the users,
6. The members of the EISC request the European Council, the European Commission and the European Space Agency that the GMES be considered as an absolute priority for the operational implementation of programs (recalling the 2003 resolution). They request that initial operations be made ready for August 2005. They request that the resources of the European Space Agency ESRIN centre, of the European Union Satellite Centre, including the decentralized resources of member states, be used to their full capacity and that EUMETSAT be closely associated with the integration process. Along these lines, a simple and effective managing structure is called upon, drawing lessons from the experience of Galileo. GMES is a global system that has to satisfy European requirements in the area of environmental monitoring, and the acquisition and processing of information for defence and security. The European Space Agency and the European Defence Agency should be involved.
7. The members of the EISC request that GMES be a decision-making tool at the service of political decision-makers. GMES must initially provide political leaders, European Union countries and members of the European Union Council, and of ESA at a minimum, with a capacity to envision and monitor changes in our planet in environmental terms as well as events of any other nature, on a continuing basis. GMES must facilitate the prevention and, if needed, the management of crises to be managed from an operational standpoint. Members of the EISC ask that the GMES system starts up promptly with the launch of one or more operational satellites in order to define and discover the shortcomings vis à vis the demand.

8. Members of the EISC call on member states, the European Commission and Europol to constitute with the European Space Agency, which is in charge of the development of the necessary means, space resources to fight against clandestine immigration, and organised crime, both within and outside European borders.

9. Members of the EISC call on member states and the European Commission to constitute with the European Space Agency a system of coordination for civil security within the Union using GMES. This coordination could be extended to embrace the surveillance of European Union coasts and borders.

10. Members of the EISC desire that the European Armaments Agency, the European Commission and the European Space Agency as well as industrial groups, jointly determine the most appropriate solutions for the definition of space systems for defence and European Union security, including providing operational support for the European corps, and the member states.

11. Permanent members of the EISC request the need for Europe to develop a strong European space transportation policy. Guarantee of independent access to space is a strategic priority for Europe. Ariane, Souyouz in Kourou, VEGA programmes and their follow-up must be fully supported politically and financially. Priority must be given to a European launch solution in case of institutional launches. Ariane 5, Souyouz and VEGA should be preferably chosen for any member states institutional launch. A "European launch act" should be implemented with a fair and correct division of costs for infrastructures and operations between the European Union, ESA and the Member States.

12. Permanent members of the EISC request development of a European immediate launch capacity based on technologies developed at a European level available in the event of one or more member states or the European Union express an urgent need.

13. Members of the EISC request that all means be studied and implemented to enable surveillance and protection of strategic space infrastructure constituted by GMES and GALILEO, taking in account what has already been realised in the security area by these two programmes.

14. Members of the EISC propose presenting resolutions related to issues concerning protection of citizens to the High Representative for the CFSP.

15. Members of the EISC insist, based on the conclusions of the third Earth Observation Summit of 2005, on the importance of global cooperation in terms of environmental surveillance. They support the idea of coupling the GMES initiative keeping European objectives as the key priority, is coordinated with other surveillance systems as proposed through the GEOSS system, with the purpose of strengthening the Space and Major Catastrophes Charter, as soon as possible. A global warning system should be studied. Permanent members of the EISC suggest to their partners in China, India, Japan, the United States, Brazil, Canada and Russia to establish a working group with responsibility for preparing proposals for the various heads of space agencies present at the VIIIth EISC, to be held under Belgian chairmanship in 2006.

16. Acknowledging that the future security policy should take into account potential threats from space, both to spacecraft and to the planet, Europe should take immediate action,

17. Recalling the Conference held in Madrid, the EISC requests ESA and the European Commission to guarantee European independence in space debris monitoring, space surveillance, space meteorology, detection of Near Earth Objects and virtual observatories, providing the adequate budget to allow necessary continuity and sustainability of research, programmes and facilities, thus enabling a more secure operation of Europe's space systems. The forthcoming ESA Ministerial Conference will be an adequate starting point for this initiative.

18. EISC calls upon ESA and the European Union to assess future mission concepts aimed at enabling sustainable development, environmental protection, risk management and prevention of hazardous space objects. Along these lines we call upon the recommendations of ESA's Near-Earth Object Mission Advisory Panel (NEOMAP).

II. Pursuing Space Exploration

19. Celebrating the scientific and technological accomplishments of Europe in the field of the exploration of our Solar system and the success of the ESA missions to the Moon (SMART-1), Mars (MARS EXPRESS) and Saturn-Titan (CASSINI-HUYGHENS),

20. Recognising that space exploration and knowledge of the universe would appear to be inherent to the progress of humanity,

21. Recognising that space exploration is a major area of interest for international cooperation, in particular for inhabited flights and space sciences,

22. Noting the determination of the United States to relaunch their exploration program to the Moon and Mars,

23. Considering that space exploration should provide a response to the technological challenges and industrial ambitions of Europe and that in this context also the potential of the International Space Station (ISS) for future space activities should be fully used.

24. Members of the EISC call on all parties interested in European Space activities to ensure that Europe has an effective political resolve underpinned by technical and financial resources adequate for the objectives that have been set.

25. Members of the EISC request that the new high technology initiatives (FLPP, Space Exploration Programme, GSTP, TRP, ARTES, etc.) should be assisted by all concerned in the space sector.

26. Members of the EISC propose an international programme of exploration towards Mars with the sending of a European astronaut. Facing the importance of the American, Chinese, and Indian programmes, Europe must be involved in development of the autonomous capacity to go to the Moon, through international cooperation.

27. Members of the EISC suggest pursuing studies of innovative systems in the area of propulsion.

28. Accordingly, permanent members of the EISC invite all European players to continue the dialogue with the United States, Russia and other interested countries and to formulate a constructive and ambitious proposal for co-operation with the United States in the framework of the American exploration initiative

III. Industrial policy & Research

29. The EISC is convinced that European space industry and research are a strategic element of sovereignty and the scientific and technological development of Europe. The skills and expertise acquired in Europe in this area need to be safeguarded and developed so as to be able to respond, in terms of space systems and infrastructure, to the objectives and growing needs of the European Union and member state sectoral policies. Furthermore, the European expertise acquired in the development of the products and services making use of space infrastructures must be developed in order to serve the needs of the user community worldwide. The EISC insists on the necessity of integration into the framework of the Lisbon process which has fixed as objective that the European Union become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world.

30. The EISC desires that conditions be provided to enable European Space industry to tackle the major technological challenges by the year 2015.

31. Considering:

- the extent of merger activity and industrial consolidation in Europe over the last 10 years, the importance of promoting the emergence of a European Space industry with a global dimension based on EADS, Alcatel, Finmeccanica, Safran, etc, the presence in several countries of an industrial capacity at the level of subcontractors, suppliers and SMEs
- the necessity of strengthening alliances so that Europe can build up an industry capable of competing with US and Asian industries

32. The EISC recommends a strengthening of cooperation between these groups and with the subcontractors, suppliers and SMEs, and insists on and the necessity of rationalising research and production activities, while at the same time taking into account national requirements in terms of maintaining pools of employment and

centres of expertise. and while valuing the technological and scientific expertise of the industry throughout Europe

33. Considering that:

- currently European space industry does not have sufficient public financing for R&D to support its long-term competitivity, in particular vis-à-vis the US space sector,
- that the level of European financing is an order of magnitude lower than the one of the US, in particular in the area of defence and security,
- that the launch industry will suffer from 2005 on from a dramatic loss of expertise as a result of a lack of any concrete development programme for the post Ariane 5 period.
- that space is a largely institutional sector, and therefore it requires a tailored industrial policy aimed at ensuring both efficiency and an equitable distribution of work on both geographical and "industrial tissue" dimensions.

34. Celebrating the scientific, technological and commercial spin-offs of ESA research and development programmes such as ARTES, GSTP and PRODEX which answer to the needs of the user community and the companies specialised in the development of products and services for this community,

35. Considering however that these companies particularly suffer from the lack of priority given by ESA to its own research and development programmes,

36. The EISC proposes the immediate approval of the second period of the ESA Future Launcher Preparatory program (FLPP) at the occasion of the next ESA Ministerial Council to be held on December 2005, based on a coherent and cost-effective approach elaborated from a global long term vision for launchers, including also "demonstrators", in particular in the framework of security and defence questions. The demonstrators program should be widened to embrace all areas concerned by space activities and also wherever there might exist sources of technological growth (telecommunications, satellite observation, propulsion systems etc.)

37. Recalling the last European Interparliamentary Space Conference held in Madrid on November 10th, 2004, the EISC confirms its support to a fair and balanced distribution of industrial space activities amongst all members and cooperating States of ESA, leading to an increased European productivity on the international market through established, accepted and transparent mechanisms. In this respect, the EISC calls upon ESA to keep the principle of "juste retour", recognising the difficulty of this given the evolving structure of the European Industry, adapted to the new European institutional framework, as the cornerstone of its industrial policy. In addition to the existing principle of "juste retour" applied in ESA, EISC calls upon the European Commission to assess the possibility of applying new industrial policy principles for EC funding of space activities, taking into account as much as possible a fair and balanced distribution of the industrial space activities.

38. This fair and balanced distribution of industrial work is envisaged among member states and among integrators, non-primes and SMEs. In order to guarantee this goal, the EISC proposes:

- To recognise that the "juste retour" principle is instrumental to the industrial space policy within ESA. Any action in the industrial policy domain should be based upon the rules set up in the ESA Convention, and subject of consensus among ESA Member States.
- To foster the use of similar schemes in EU-financed programmes, specifically designed in a way that they are compatible with existing European directives and regulations.
- To introduce elements of industrial policy aimed at ensuring, both at ESA and EU levels, that non-primes and SMEs, comprising most of the European "industrial tissue", have an equitable participation in European space projects along the space value chain.

39. Considering the nature of the principle of industrial return of ESA and its positive effect on the setting up of an industrial space capacity,

40. Considering the need to examine its evolution in order to better respond to the needs of the space sector,

41. Considering the nature of the financing instruments of the European Union and the fact that they are no longer adapted to the specific characteristics of the space sector,

42. The EISC encourages the Commission and ESA to begin an evaluation study comparing the different scenarios of procedures in force at the moment,

43. The EISC further requests that the conditions for participation in the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Development be adapted in matters of space and security, in order to ensure optimisation of flows of public funds to industry.

44. Considering the strategic nature of the development of the European Space industry, in particular in the area of advanced defence technologies and security, the EISC desires that in the frame of the institutional markets of Union-members, preference be given to European industrial products

45. The EISC also underlines the importance for Europe of maintaining its independence in the supply of selected strategic components and would like to see effective surveillance of the holding structures in the industries concerned.

IV. The education and training of young persons

46. Considering the dramatic decline in the number of highly qualified staff and the disaffection of young persons for scientific and technological branches of space industry,

47. Considering the lack of "space culture", at different social and professional level,

48. Considering the legal framework developed at a European level to promote the legal position of researchers, in particular through the directive on the mobility of researchers,

49. Considering that hundreds of thousands of new jobs have to be filled by scientific personnel to respond to the goals of the Lisbon process,

50. Considering that studies have shown that the age between 10 and 14 is crucial for future professional career choices and that the then emerging interest in sciences has to be cultivated and strengthened,

51. Considering that numerous children are fascinated by space and that the space sector is a certain eyecatcher for the promotion of sciences vis-à-vis young persons,

52. Considering the lack of real consensus of the International Space University located in Strasbourg,

53. The members of the EISC encourage the national initiatives taken in large numbers in the field of space and education and call upon a co-ordination at the European level of all these initiatives. ESA must play the role of central co-ordinator in this respect.

54. The members of the EISC insist on the importance of supporting the national and regional initiatives taken in the area of space and education, since they can highlight local peculiarities and anticipate national and regional tendencies and needs.

55. The members of the EISC believe that these initiatives taken on a European, national and regional level, leave room for private initiatives that can mobilise each in their own way young people around the space theme, such as the KEO project, that Europe must continue to support, and possible actions of industry.

56. The EISC proposes that concerted measures between all partners (industrial, universities, member states, ESA, Commission, etc.) be initiated to encourage the awakening of vocations and the recruitment of young graduates useful to the sector.

57. Considering the natural interest young people have for the protection of the environment, it is pertinent to make them aware of the concrete applications and the progress in space research, such as the protection of the endangered species of our planet.

58. The existing "International Space University" in Strasbourg must be clearly undertaken by the institutional and private space actors. An innovative and strong educative programme, using the capacities of other space related universities in Europe could be initiated jointly by agencies, universities and industrial partners. The "Board" would be made up of managers from the various entities. The aim being to recruit students in all disciplines (scientific or not) interested by careers in space. The aim would also be to create a humanist spirit (science courses could be linked with management training and old antics philosophy) likely to encourage an attitude of international co-operation. An individualised training programme lasting several years in the five continents could be envisaged, with the creation of a "space passport" and a tutoring system. A pool of young “space graduates” should be able to work in any continent.

59. The EISC propose a real and intense promotion of space toward the youngest, as well as managers and specialists in touch with space matters.

Conclusions:

The permanent members reaffirmed their desire to see the EISC fulfil its role as a platform for dialogue between the various political and industrial players (ESA, EU) in the European Space sector, delegation heads will ensure that information be provided to their heads of state and governments on the final resolutions adopted by the EISC.

The permanent members assure the ongoing work of the Conference by means of regular informal meetings with heads of delegations.

The permanent members have noted the importance of relations with new member countries of the European Union. These countries have been admitted to the EISC as observers

The permanent members receive European parliamentarians from the Sky and Space Group and the Assembly of the WEU at the conferences, and would like to establish ongoing dialogue with them.

Permanent members of the EISC remind the European Space Agency, the European Commission, the European Parliament and Member states, of the strategic importance for Europe of having available and autonomous access to space through support of the Ariane 5 and VEGA launch programs, by the installation of the Russian launcher Soyouz at Kourou. These capabilities need to be ensured by ongoing public support for the program developing future European space launch capabilities and the FLPP programme.

Priority must be given to launch services lead by European stakeholders in the framework of institutional launches by member countries of the ESA.

Permanent members support the European participation in the International Space Station (ISS). Europe has gained a high reputation and established itself as a reliable partner. The EISC request that the ISS be considered as a part of the European research infrastructure to be exploited at the maximum extent.

Permanent members support an ongoing and strengthened partnership with the Russian Federation, providing a natural continuity with European space activities. They extend a proposal to the Russian Federation to join the EISC as a member for the VIIIth EISC to be chaired 2006 by Belgium. They insist on a more intense and closer co-operation between the Russian Federation and ESA. Reference can be made new transportation systems replacing Soyuz and the Space Shuttle which would give Europe the opportunity not only to broaden the international co-operation, but also to increase the knowledge, technology and competence of its industry and science sector. Moreover, this co-operation would enable this to be achieved at a much lower cost than an autonomous route.

They nevertheless request greater clarity regarding the political and technical agenda surrounding decision-making in the elaboration of European Space policy by the ESA, the European Commission and member countries. They call on representatives of HSPLG, ESA, and the Commission to keep heads of delegations of the EISC regularly informed.

The EISC insists on the importance of the White Paper as reference for the development of a European space policy.

The EISC requests that a delegation of permanent members may assist the joint Space Councils of EU and ESA and be kept regularly informed of the status of work between the Agency and the Commission.

Within this context, the EISC urges a timely and sound decision in selecting the Galileo concession.

The EISC calls on Finance Ministers of the Union, the European Parliament, and the European Council to ensure that financings are made available, whether they be Community, intergovernmental or national. The European Commission is called on in the context of the financial outlook 2007 – 2013, to develop bid procedures and financing instruments adapted to the specificities of the space sector.

The EISC deems necessary a doubling of the European space budget in the period up to 2013 as proposed in the Green Paper by the European Commission.

Members of the EISC remind the European Space Agency, the European Commission, the European Parliament and Member states of the strategic importance for Europe of having a scientific, technological and industrial base sufficiently robust over the long-term to be able to successfully implement European Union policies, whether they be in the area of applications, scientific research or exploration.

The EISC suggest the introduction of the concept of "critical capacity objectives", in other words endowing Europe with indisputable capabilities within a coherent research and development process and the immediate implementation of operational programmes required by European Union sectoral policies. To serve these objectives, platforms incorporating these capabilities will be identified for key sectors. They will associate universities, industrial groups, public and private research laboratories and civil and military authorities. Their financing can be assured jointly by the ESA, the Commission, member countries and industrial groups.

The following national delegations took part in the proceedings:

As permanent members:
Belgium,
France,
Germany,
Italy,
Spain,
United Kingdom,

Other parliamentary delegations:
Brazil,
Canada,
China,
Czech Republic,
India,
Israël,
Japan,
Norway (represented by the Norwegian Space Agency),
Portugal,
Russian Federation,
United States,

WEU Assembly

Space agencies:
ASI (Italy),
CNES (France),
CNSA (China),
CSA (Canada),
CSO (Czech Republic)
DLR (Germany),
JAXA (Japan),
NASA (United States),
Roskosmos (Russian Federation).

Institutions:
ESA European Space Agency
European Commission.

Guest participants at the public part :
ESPI – European Space Policy Institute
Representatives from Industry, R&D, Science, Ministries and public entities