

Resolution on an EU approach for space traffic management – an EU contribution addressing a global challenge

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution on an EU approach for space traffic management – an EU contribution addressing a global challenge.

Space traffic management (STM) is of strategic importance for the Union and contributes to guaranteeing safe, secure and autonomous access to, return from and use of space, guaranteeing long-term sustainability of outer space and promoting and ensuring the continued competitiveness of the EU space industry. In recent years, the number of space operations, satellites in orbit and debris have significantly increased. This development has led to the exponential increase in risk for the safety of in-orbit space operations and the sustainability of outer space.

Parliament stressed that the increase in space operations, the number of space actors and the unprecedented increase in satellite constellation size are quantitative aspects that **present serious challenges** that need to be addressed, notably through preventive measures and the development and deployment of advanced, automated techniques such as automated collision avoidance.

The resolution pointed out that to properly manage space traffic, data based on quantitative metrics and measurement tools is needed and to this end an increase in the number and quality of sensors, robust data sharing and debris advances are also needed. The development of the space sector requires the EU to take a **strategic and ambitious approach** covering regulatory aspects, the international dimension and SST services.

Parliament stressed the need to promote an internationally recognised definition of STM in order to ensure a common understanding of all parameters and thereby contribute to the safety of space operations in increasingly congested outer space. It considered that to guarantee safe and secure space operations, a **clear regulatory framework** for space activities should serve as a basis for an EU-wide level playing field for space activities and a comprehensive framework for European binding legislation on space.

The Commission is called on to:

- develop a set of EU rules, standards, technical specifications and guidelines and to actively promote these rules at international level;
- take both civilian and defence/security needs into consideration, to evaluate the impact of STM development on European public and private stakeholders and to also consult interested stakeholders from outside the EU;
- enhance the Union SST services regarding collected data, re-entry and fragmentation analyses and to further develop the EU SST database, including detected, catalogued and predicted movements of space objects;
- further invest in research on and the deployment of **debris reduction technologies** by using all opportunities for EU funding of research and innovation activities;

- make all political and diplomatic efforts, including engaging with the UN, to develop a **comprehensive international approach** for the application of common standards and rules and implementation of concrete STM solutions at global level;
- propose STM legislation before 2024, including on system governance and the responsibilities of the proposed EU Agency for the Space Programme and based on the mid-term review of the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework and the current Union space programme, STM integration in the next space programme.