Space policy: coordination of the Union with the European Space Agency (ESA)

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The committee adopted the report by Konstantinos ALYSSANDRAKIS (GUE/NGL, GR) on the Commission working document on European space policy. The committee felt that the European Space Agency (ESA) should be allowed to enlarge the traditional focus of its work (research and development for European space exploration) to include projects initiated in the context of the EU. It called for all EU Member States to be actively involved in space research and applications and also urged the Commission and the Council to step up cooperation between the EU and other countries. In particular, it wanted to see negotiations opened between the EU and the world's space powers (the US, Russia, China and Japan) to collaborate on developing satellite launch vehicles and creating a Global Stationary Satellite Position that was not compromised by national security considerations. The committee also felt that the EU should have a policy and strategy for using space-based systems for environmental and security monitoring, in order to protect citizens' lives and natural resources, identify or even avert natural or man-made disasters, combat fraud and verify international treaty compliance.