

COMPARING SPACE POLICIES

**ONE AIMED AT
MAINTAINING U.S. SUPERIORITY**

**THE OTHER AIMED AT
ACHIEVING EUROPEAN ASPIRATIONS**

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A DIFFICULT COMPARISON

- The new United States National Space Policy (NSP) is intended to preserve existing U.S. superiority in space and to preserve U.S. freedom of action to benefit from the investments it has made in space. It is the latest in a series of Presidentially-approved policy statements dating back to January 1960, with a great deal of continuity over those 47 years
- The new European Space Policy (ESP) is the first of its kind. In many ways it is an advocacy document making the case why Europe should make space a more significant sector in shaping the future of the European Union. It calls for an expanded role in space for the European Commission while leaving ESA's activities basically unchanged.
- The two policies thus exist in different contexts and serve different purposes.

**BUT THERE ARE ALSO MANY WAYS IN WHICH
THE POLICIES ARE SEEMINGLY SIMILAR**

A KEY AREA OF AGREEMENT

- NSP – “In this new century, those who effectively utilize space will enjoy added prosperity and security and will hold a substantial advantage over those who do not. . . . In order to increase knowledge, discovery, economic prosperity, and to enhance the national security, the United States must have robust, effective, and efficient space capabilities. ”
- ESP – “Europe cannot afford to lose out on securing the potential economic and strategic benefits of space for its citizens. . . . The development of a truly European Space Policy is a strategic choice for Europe, if it does not want to become irrelevant.”

BOTH POLICIES TOOK A LONG TIME TO DEVELOP

- NSP – Prepared by an interagency committee, required 40+ drafts and more than two years before agreement was reached
- ESP – Required two years of EC and ESA consultations between themselves and with their member states

Which was the more difficult process to bring to completion? Which process required more compromises among differing interests?

BOTH POLICIES AIM AT LEADERSHIP – BUT IN DIFFERENT WAYS

- **NSP – A fundamental goal is to “strengthen the nation’s space leadership and ensure that space capabilities are available in time to further U.S. national security, homeland security, and foreign policy objectives”**
- **ESP – “Europe needs an effective space policy to enable it to exert global leadership in selected policy areas in accordance with European interests and values. To fulfill such roles the EU increasingly relies on autonomous decision-making, based on space based information and communication systems. . . . The EU, ESA, and their member states have continued to invest strongly to maintain leadership in space-based science.”**

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY

1996

- The United States is committed to the exploration and use of outer space by all nations for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all humanity. "Peaceful purposes" allow defense and intelligence-related activities in pursuit of national security and other goals.
- The United States rejects any claims to sovereignty by any nation over outer space or celestial bodies, or any portion thereof, and rejects any limitations on the fundamental right of **sovereign nations** to acquire data from space.
- The United States considers the space systems **of any nation** to be national property with the right of passage through and operations in space without interference. Purposeful interference with space systems shall be viewed as an infringement on **sovereign** rights.

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- Same
- ... the fundamental right of **the United States to operate in** and acquire data from space.
- The United States considers space systems to have the rights of passage through and operations in space without interference. Consistent with this principle, the United States will view purposeful interference with **its** space systems as an infringement on **its** rights.

BOTH POLICIES ARE CONCERNED WITH FREEDOM OF ACTION IN SPACE

(But the United States gives this topic much more emphasis!)

- **NSP – “Freedom of action in space is as important to the United States as air power and sea power. . . . The United States considers space capabilities . . . vital to its national interests. Consistent with this policy, the United States will: preserve its rights, capabilities, and freedom of action in space. . . . The United States will oppose the development of new legal regimes or other restrictions that seek to prohibit or limit U.S. use of space.”**
- **The NSP recognizes that with reliance on space comes vulnerability, and makes very clear that the U.S. will defend its ability to benefit from the investments it has made in space.**
- **ESP – “Independent access to space capabilities is therefore a strategic asset for Europe.” One goal is “to secure unrestricted access to new and critical technologies, systems and capabilities in order to ensure independent European space applications.”**

THE UNITED STATES IS MUCH MORE CONCERNED WITH PROTECTING ITS SPACE ASSETS

- **NSP - The United States will “dissuade or deter others from either impeding those rights or developing capabilities intended to do so; take those actions necessary to protect its space capabilities; respond to interference; and deny, if necessary, adversaries the use of space capabilities hostile to U. S. national interests.”**
- **ESP – “Space-based capabilities . . . must be protected against disruption.”**

BOTH POLICIES SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- **NSP – “The United States will seek to cooperate with other nations in the peaceful use of outer space to extend the benefits of space, enhance space exploration, and to protect and promote freedom around the world.”**
- **NSP - A fundamental policy goal is to “encourage international cooperation with foreign nations and/or consortia on space activities that are of mutual benefit and that further the peaceful exploration and use of space, as well as to advance national security, homeland security, and foreign policy objectives.”**
- **ESP – “Europe needs to remain an indispensable partner providing first-class contributions to global initiatives and exerting leadership in selected domains in accordance with European interests and values. With an open attitude towards cooperation, Europe must take judgments on when to rely on partners and where to retain independence.”**

Comparing Language related to International Space Cooperation

1996

- The United States will pursue and conduct international cooperative space-related activities that achieve **scientific, foreign policy, economic, or national security benefits** for the nation.
- International agreements will
 - **Promote equitable cost-sharing and yield benefits** to the United States by increasing access to foreign scientific and technological data and expertise and foreign research and development facilities
 - **Enhance relations** with U.S. allies and Russia while supporting initiatives with other states of the former Soviet Union and emerging spacefaring nations

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- The United States Government will pursue, as appropriate, and consistent with U.S. national security interests, international cooperation with foreign nations and/or consortia on space activities that are of **mutual benefit and that further the peaceful exploration and use of space, as well as to advance national security, homeland security, and foreign policy objectives.**
- The Secretary of State, after consultation with the heads of appropriate Departments and Agencies, shall carry out diplomatic and public diplomacy efforts, as appropriate, to **build an understanding of and support for U. S. national space policies and programs** and to **encourage the use of U.S. space capabilities and systems** by friends and allies.

BOTH POLICIES IDENTIFY SOME GENERAL PROBLEMS

- NSP – Identifies the need to address
 - Developing space professionals
 - Improving space development and procurement
 - Increasing and Strengthening Interagency Partnerships
 - Strengthening and Maintaining the U.S. Space-Related Science-Technology, and Industrial Base
- ESP – Pays attention to
 - Necessary “Foundations” including the need to attract more young people into science, engineering, and technology careers

BOTH POLICIES ARE CONCERNED WITH FOSTERING A COMPETITIVE SPACE INDUSTRY

- **NSP – “It is in the interest of the United States to foster the use of U.S. commercial capabilities around the globe and to enable a dynamic, domestic commercial space sector.”**
 - **U.S. government will not compete with private sector and will use its capabilities and services “to the maximum practical extent.”**
 - **U.S. government will “maintain a timely and responsive regulatory environment. . . without the use of direct Federal subsidies.”**
- **ESP – “A competitive European space industry is of strategic importance. . . . To achieve this goal it is essential that European public policy actors define clear policy objectives in space activities and invest public funds to achieve them. This public investment could help create a critical mass stimulating further public and private investment. A focused industry policy for space will also stimulate companies competing throughout the full value chain”**

NEITHER POLICY GIVES MUCH ATTENTION TO EXPLORATION

- NSP – Does not repeat the details of the January 2004 space exploration policy (or, for that matter, the other three sector specific policies issued during the Bush administration)
- ESP – “The international exploration endeavour has a significant political appeal in a vision of European identity. . . . The US, China and Russia have moved forward with ambitious space exploration plans. Now, Europe needs to urgently respond to those challenges.”

NEITHER POLICY MENTIONS THE MOON. (ESP MENTIONS MARS)

**SO WHAT ARE THE MAJOR
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE
TWO POLICIES?**

THE U.S. NATIONAL SPACE POLICY

- States specifically in its first principle that
“The United States is committed to the exploration and use of outer space by all nations for peaceful purposes, and for the benefit of all humanity.”
- Does not mention specific projects or programs
- Pays focused attention to national security space efforts, including both military and intelligence programs
 - Concerned with coordination of those efforts
 - Overriding concern regarding protecting U.S. space activities against disruption
- Mentions
 - Space Nuclear Power (Why?)
 - Orbital Debris
 - Export Controls
 - Classification of Intelligence Activities (and what is not classified)

THE EUROPEAN SPACE POLICY

- Gives first priority to user-driven application programs
 - Galileo
 - GMES
 - Communications
- Gives a second priority to security and defense-related space activities
 - Does not have much to say, since military security is not a European Commission responsibility
 - Recognizes dual-use character of many European space efforts and stresses interoperability
 - Recognizes that military-only programs will remain the responsibility of individual nations (Or European Council)

THE EUROPEAN SPACE POLICY

Institutional Dimensions

- Gives detailed attention to the relationship between the EU/EC, ESA, and their member states
- Codifies the new EU role “to lead in identifying and bringing together user needs and to aggregate the political will in support of these and wider policy objectives.”
- Says that ESA will focus on “the exploration of space and on the basic tools: access to space, scientific knowledge and technologies.”
- Fails to create a strong institutional framework for coordinating European space effort. Rather it says that “as space increasingly will gain an EU dimension the goal remains for the EU and ESA to pursue closer and more efficient cooperation.”
 - The “impact assessment” accompanying the policy makes it clear that a closer EU-ESA relationship and a stronger EU role in space were considered and rejected, with the hope that these could develop in the future.

ONE FINAL DIFFERENCE

- **The actual U.S. National Space Policy is a classified document. All that has been released is a “fact sheet.” It was posted on a White House web site without fanfare on a late Friday afternoon of a holiday weekend. The general press did not notice it until 12 days later.**
- **The European Space Policy was released on May 22 after its approval by the European Space Council. There was a high level press conference and a set of glossy brochures accompanying its release.**

