

Report: The 9th Conference on European Space Policy

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Summary:

The 9th Conference on European Space Policy was held at Egmont Palace in Brussels, Belgium, on January 24th and 25th, 2017.



This annual event allows participants to discuss European Union (EU) policies towards space activities and industries. More than 700 people attended, mainly representing European governments and space agencies.

This ninth conference centered on discussions surrounding the “Space Strategy for Europe”, which was established by the EC (European

Commission) in October, 2016, and forwarded to the European Parliament, Council of the European Union, European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions. A number of senior EU government officials participated in the event, including the President, cabinet ministers, and members of the European Parliament. Mainly, the growth of space activities and space industries in the EU was discussed, and meetings were carried out at round tables that could be freely attended. We noticed, however, few opportunities for meaningful discussion. Explanations about “Space Strategy for Europe” were the main feature of this conference.

Space Strategy for Europe:

Firstly, we would like to explain the “Space



Strategy for Europe” document briefly (see: <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2016/EN/COM-2016-705-F1-EN-MAIN.PDF>), published in October, 2016. This document is equivalent to the Japanese Basic Plan on Space Policy. It describes their basic policies, and states that the EU government will inject more than 12 billion Euros worth of public funds. Using these funds, the European Commission (EC) will carry out the following programs via related organizations, such as the European Space Agency (ESA):

- 1) Satellite Positioning Systems: Galileo and EGNOS
- 2) Earth Observation System: Copernicus
- 3) Space Research and Development: The Horizon 2020 Program (Subsidy for Research and Development)

Via these three programs, the EU government states that they will achieve a 33% share of the world satellite industry market, create employment for 230,000 specialists, and make substantial contributions to the space industry, including for smaller companies. They announced 46 to 54 billion Euros in economic results, and a 21% share of the world market in 2014.

The Space Strategy for Europe establishes the following 5 goals:

- Maximizing benefits for society and the EU economy via space activities
- Fostering a globally competitive and innovative European space sector
- Reinforcing Europe’s autonomy in accessing and using space within a safe and secure environment

- Strengthening Europe’s role as a global influence and promoting international cooperation
- Ensuring effective implementations

Presentations and Discussions:

This conference took place over one and a half days, but we were unable to gain any new information separate from “Space Strategy for Europe” published last October. One would think that private organizations would insist on ‘more detail information’ regarding the government document. We consider the above-mentioned goals to be abstract in nature, and do not see financial support coming from government budgets. We also saw no indication of a specific time schedule or ‘road map’, like those shown for the Japanese Basic Plan on Space Policy. These are topics that weighed on my mind during the presentations and discussions.



<Omitted below>

Other Miscellaneous Comments

Brussels has a reputation for being very dark in the winter - sunrise is at 8:30 a.m. and sunset starts at 5:30 p.m. My trips between the hotel and the conference site were done in the dark. Early afternoon temperatures were a chilly 0 degrees Celsius, and people needed protection from the cold. Belgium is known as the Empire of Beer, and I can now see why locals do not need to keep their beer in a refrigerator.



If you have any questions about this report, please contact:



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