Presentation: A critical commentary on the EU space strategy for security and defence

Introduction

Outline of the presentation and brief reminder of the context and content of the text

1. An undefined threat
In general, a defence strategy — whether space-based or not — logically emerges from the moment threats have been clearly established, in order to prioritize them, formulate a coherent and effective response to them, and grant a clear mandate to the various stakeholders. The strategy does not clearly define or contextualise the threat to which it is supposed to respond. Rather, it indicates that a catalogue kept by the High Representative will update each year the threats defined by the Member States. This way of proceeding not only illustrates a lack of political consensus. It opens the door to worst-case scenarios and indicates that the EU is refusing to position itself.

2. From the militarization of European space policy to the security dilemma
Europe's security and defence ambitions often operate in such a way as to demonstrate credibility in the eyes of other players on the international stage (particularly the United States), by implementing measures that militarize its activities without taking into account the threat it in turn poses to states that are not its allies. The security dilemma is, in fact, a symmetrical concept. We must therefore not minimize the signal we send out to other players by committing ourselves to this path.

3. Initiatives that are not real diplomatic solutions
The strategy includes a section on the desire to forge partnerships supporting good practices to be adopted in space. This initiative concerns allied States and organizations above all. This can only lead to a biased view of the evolution of the space landscape and the formulation of responses. Rather, i'ts with the actors with whom Europe risks a potential confrontation that it must maintain dialogue to avoid conflicts in space and achieve the establishment of a framework of good conduct. This is the basis of arms control.

Conclusion