

African Leadership Conference

SESSION 4.3: Commercial Applications of Space Science and Technology in Africa: Report

Chair: Renier Balt

Rapporteur: Ron Olivier

Introduction

The session contained 5 speakers who generally spoke on the interaction between government and the private sector. The following presentations were made:

- 1) Dr. S.O Mohammed of NASRDA presented a paper on TRENDS IN GLOBAL SALES AND UTILISATION OF EARTH OBSERVATION SATELLITES, PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES FOR AFRICA. This paper provided a clear view on the chronology of satellites for earth observation, the impacts of the utilisation of space image data and key influences, challenges and prospects for the various regions on the world, concluding with positive outlook for Africa.
- 2) Mr Ron Olivier of SunSpace presented a paper on Building and Exporting Small Satellite Systems in a Constrained Market. This paper presented the potential of SunSpace as the only private small satellite manufacturer in Africa to interact as an enabler to African governments to increase their technological capacity in space. It concluded with a question as to whether Africa is ready to take on the challenge to providing for itself in space in collaboration with African private sector partners.
- 3) Dr Mark Comninos of Marcom presented a paper on the *CHEETAH-1 COMMERCIAL LAUNCH VEHICLE PROGRAM*. This paper gave an overview of launch vehicles, an description of the innovations Marcom is undertaking in building new launch vehicles at low cost and minimal risk. It concluded by asking whether Africa was ready to interact with innovative private sector initiatives in the launch arena to enable the continent.
- 4) Dr O. A. Fashade of NASRDA presented a paper on NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES FOR THE ACQUISITION OF ROCKET LAUNCH CAPACITY AND THE ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE "NIGERIAN STRATEGY". This paper indicated the rationale and the process for Nigerian efforts to obtain its own launch capacity and concluded that the effort has thus far been a success and will soon be ready for interaction with other African nations.

- 5) Abimbola Alale-Oloye of NigComsat Ltd presented a paper on THE ROLE OF NIGERAN COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE IN AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES. This paper indicated that without socio-economic development provided through programs like the Nigerian Communications satellite, space science and technology is not feasible. It concluded that the Nigerian communications satellite program is benefitting the whole of Africa socio-economically and acts as a catalyst for further space science development.

Concluding Remarks

Private sector space development without government support is not possible in Africa. There is not enough collaboration between enabling private sector initiatives and African governments to and this tends to retard growth in the critical field of space science. This conference represented an opportunity for government to get together with the private sector and served a useful purpose.