

EN
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Answer given by Ms Bieńkowska
on behalf of the European Commission
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The Commission is aware of the risk associated to the space debris proliferation. In order to tackle this concern, several steps have been taken. Decision No 541/2014/EU¹ establishing a Space Surveillance and Tracking (SST) Support Framework was adopted in April 2014². The general objective of the SST Support Framework is to contribute to the protection of European and national space infrastructures from space debris.

The objective of the SST Decision is to reduce the risks of collisions and prevent the proliferation of space debris through a network of Member States sensors (telescopes, radars and lasers). Since July 2016, the EU has provided operational SST services free of charge to registered users. As from 1 September 2018, 117 spacecraft receive collision avoidance services.

On 6 June 2018, the Commission put forward a proposal for a Regulation establishing the space programme of the Union³ which reinforces SST activities. It includes the Space Situational Awareness (SSA) component, which is composed of SST, Space Weather and Near Earth Objects. In this proposal, the Commission has proposed to add a new service which directly aims to ensure space sustainability by trying to remove the current debris and developing methods to avoid the creation of new debris.

At the international level, the EU and its Member States launched an initiative for a non-legally binding International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities in 2012. Experience has shown that, in spite of sustained efforts by the EU, this initiative has not found sufficient support in the international community.

¹ Decision No 541/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 establishing a Framework for Space Surveillance and Tracking Support, OJ L 158, 27.5.2014, p. 227–234.

² SST Decision.

³ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the space programme of the Union and the European Union Agency for the Space Programme and repealing Regulations (EU) No 912/2010, (EU) No 1285/2013, (EU) No 377/2014 and Decision 541/2014/EU, COM(2018) 447 final.