

Space, Defence and Security

Voice-over 1:

Walls and watchtowers have long been used to ensure the safety of citizens sheltering under their protection. The guardians of the twenty-first century are no less vigilant than their ancestors, but their means of keeping watch have changed somewhat.

Voice-over 1:

In space, there's traditionally been a clear distinction between civilian and military missions for many years, but now that's changing.

Voice-over 2:

Security issues today affect the civilian sector as much as the military. Whether you're dealing with maritime security or border security, you still need the same means of observation and surveillance. So, to use a fashionable word, we've realised that there are synergies that we can exploit. We can use the same means to satisfy both demands.

Voice-over 1:

Detecting potentially harmful objects among increasing space congestion provides one example of this civilian-military synergy. The French Air Force operates a military radar system they call Graves. It scans low earth orbits to pick out all objects, in particular spy satellites. And to refine their results, the military analysts at Graves often join forces with German civilian scientists at an organisation called FGAN.

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Not far from Cologne, a radome hides a monster satellite dish. It's a radar system, designed to create images of objects in space. In short, the French military find it; the German civilians show them what it looks like.

Ludger Leushacke:

Our task is to identify satellites, to find out, er, what kind of object we are seeing now, and er, what it does and if it is possibly, a-a hazard, uh, or a-a risky object, for-for other space objects.

Voice-over 1:

And these military-civilian joint ventures are known as dual missions.

Voice-over 2:

There are missions which have been conceived from the outset as dual missions. That is, they're paid for with military and civilian funds. They meet military specifications on the one hand and civilian specs on the other. That's how it is with COSMO-SkyMed.

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