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CLAIMS:

1. A space vehicle comprising:
an optical system having a field of view, the optical system comprising at least two optical elements spaced from one another along an optical axis of the optical
5 system, thereby defining an interior cavity of the optical system;
at least one control system, the control system comprising at least one physical element configured for performing one or more functions for enabling operation of the vehicle; and
at least one holding assembly for holding said at least one control system, the
10 holding assembly comprising a folding mechanism configured and operable to move between a folded position corresponding to an inoperative mode of the optical system, and a deployed position corresponding to an operative mode of the optical system, such that in the folded position of the folding mechanism, the control system being held by the holding assembly is at least partially located in said interior cavity of the optical
15 system for stowage, and in the deployed position of the folding mechanism, the control system being held by the holding assembly is located outside said interior cavity and outside said field of view of the optical system, thereby allowing operation of the optical system.
2. The space vehicle of claim 1, wherein said optical system comprises a telescope
20 having a primary optical element and a secondary element; said control system being positioned in between said primary and secondary elements.
3. The space vehicle of claim 1 or claim 2, comprising a plurality of control systems, each being configured to be deployable and mounted on a holding assembly respectively.
- 25 4. The space vehicle of claim 3, wherein said at least one control system comprises at least one of a processing unit configured to control space vehicle operations, an image processing module configured to process imaging data collected by said optical system, a guiding module configured for guiding said vehicle; at least a receiving/transmitting device configured for receiving/transmitting signals; an amplifier
30 device operable for amplifying signals received by the receiver; and at least one power source configured for supplying voltage supply to the vehicle.

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5. The space vehicle of any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein said folding mechanism is configured and operable for being pivotally displaceable around an axis perpendicular to said optical axis.
6. The space vehicle of any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein said folding mechanism
5 is configured and operable for being pivotally displaceable around an axis parallel to said optical axis.
7. The space vehicle of any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein said folding mechanism is configured and operable for being longitudinally displaceable along an axis perpendicular to said optical axis.
- 10 8. The space vehicle of any one of claims 1 to 7, comprising a frame comprising a plurality of surfaces forming an internal cavity and at least one opening in the frame, wherein said at least one holding assembly is mounted on at least one of the plurality of surfaces and at least partially covers said at least one opening when said control system is in its folded position.
- 15 9. The space vehicle of claim 8, wherein said folding mechanism comprises at least one support surface carrying said at least one control system and an axial hinge connecting between one of the surfaces of the frame and the support surface.
10. The space vehicle of claim 9, wherein in the deployed position said support surface is substantially perpendicular to said optical axis of the optical system.
- 20 11. The space vehicle of claim 9, wherein in said deployed position said support surface is substantially parallel to said optical axis of the optical system.
12. The space vehicle of claim 9 or 10, wherein said axial hinge has a main direction substantially parallel to said optical axis.
13. The space vehicle of claim 9 or 10, wherein said axial hinge has a direction
25 substantially perpendicular to said optical axis.
14. The space vehicle of any one of claims 1 to 13, comprising a satellite or a spacecraft.