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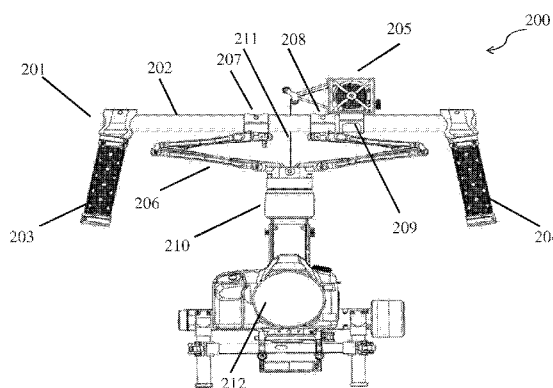


FIG. 2

(57) Abstract: Systems and methods are provided for supporting and articulating a payload using stabilizing devices. The stabilizing devices may be configured to avoid jitter in a vertical direction. The stabilizing devices may be configured to provide a force that equipoises the gravity force in the vertical direction. Therefore, it would be desirable to provide efficient stabilizing method, devices and system for stabilizing the payloads.



SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR PAYLOAD STABILIZATION

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] Payloads, including a wide range of objects, such as imaging devices, various sensors, mechanical components for performing different tasks, or cargo, may be easily subject to shaking or jitter, especially when they are held in a person's hand(s). For example, when the payload is an imaging device, such as a camera, it is likely to shoot photographs or video with noticeable shaking if no stabilizing measure is being applied. This may be adverse to high quality shooting and good user experience. Therefore, it would be desirable to provide efficient stabilizing method, devices and system for stabilizing the payloads.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The stabilizing methods, devices, or systems according to the exemplary embodiments of the invention may be used to stabilize a payload in a coordinate system. In particular, the stabilizing methods, devices, or systems herein may diminish or eliminate jitter or shaking of a payload in a vertical direction such that a good stabilization in the vertical direction would be achieved.

[0003] An aspect of the invention is directed to a stabilizing device for stabilizing a payload. The stabilizing device comprises a handle assembly comprising one or more grips configured to permit a user to support the entirety of the stabilizing device using the one or more grips. The stabilizing device also comprises a payload stabilization assembly configured to support the payload and permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation. The stabilizing device further comprises a constant force assembly operably connected to the handle assembly and configured to support the payload stabilization assembly, wherein the constant force assembly is configured to provide a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

[0004] Another aspect of the invention may be directed to a method for stabilizing a payload. The method comprises supporting the payload using a payload stabilization assembly configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation. The method also comprises providing a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero, using a constant force assembly (1) configured to support the payload stabilization assembly, and (2) operably connected to a handle assembly comprising one or more grips configured to permit a user to support the entirety of the stabilizing device using the one or more grips.

[0005] An additional aspect of the invention may be directed to a stabilizing device for stabilizing a payload. The stabilizing device comprises a handle assembly comprising one or more grips. The stabilizing device also comprises a payload stabilization assembly configured to support the payload and permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation, wherein the payload stabilization assembly is configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation when directly operably connected to the handle assembly without a constant force assembly being operably connected to the handle assembly, wherein the payload stabilization assembly is configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation when supported by the constant force assembly that is operably connected to the handle assembly, and wherein the constant force assembly is configured to provide a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

[0006] A further aspect of the invention may be directed to a method for stabilizing a payload. The method comprises supporting the payload using a payload stabilization assembly configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation. The method also comprises permitting, via the payload stabilization assembly, the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation when directly operably connected to the handle assembly without a constant force assembly being operably connected to the handle assembly. The method further comprises permitting, via the payload stabilization assembly, the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation when supported by the constant force assembly that is operably connected to the handle assembly, wherein the constant force assembly is configured to provide force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

[0007] An aspect of the invention may be directed to a constant force assembly configured for use in a stabilizing device for stabilizing a payload. The constant force assembly comprises a first interface permitting the constant force assembly to be detachably connected to a handle assembly of the stabilizing device, wherein the handle assembly comprises one or more grips. The constant force assembly also comprises a second interface permitting the constant force assembly to be detachably connected to a payload stabilization assembly of the stabilizing device and configured to support the payload stabilization assembly, wherein the payload stabilization assembly is configured to support the payload and permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation. The constant force assembly further comprises a constant force mechanism configured to provide a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly

with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

[0008] Another aspect of the invention may be directed to a method of using a constant force assembly to stabilize a payload. The method comprises permitting the constant force assembly to be detachably connected to a handle assembly of a stabilizing device using a first interface of the constant force assembly, wherein the handle assembly comprises one or more grips. The method also comprises permitting the constant force assembly to be detachably connected to a payload stabilization assembly of the stabilizing device using a second interface of the constant force assembly, wherein the payload stabilization assembly is configured to support the payload and permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation. The method further comprises providing a force, using the constant force assembly, that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

[0009] An additional aspect of the invention may be directed to a stabilizing device for stabilizing a payload. The stabilizing device comprises a handle assembly comprising one or more grips. The stabilizing device also comprises a payload stabilization assembly configured to support the payload and permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation. The stabilizing device further comprises a constant force assembly operably connected to the handle assembly and configured to support the payload stabilization assembly, wherein the constant force assembly is configured to provide a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero, wherein the constant force assembly comprises a parallelogram linkage which includes four pivots and a resilient member obliquely arranged within the parallelogram linkage, and one attachment point of the resilient member is displaced in a horizontal direction by a negative offset distance from a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of two of four pivots that are adjacent to the handle assembly.

[0010] A further aspect of the invention may be directed to a method for stabilizing a payload. The method comprises supporting the payload using a payload stabilization assembly configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation. The method also comprises providing a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero, using a constant force assembly (1) configured to support the payload stabilization assembly, and (2) operably connected to a handle assembly comprising one or more grips, wherein the constant force assembly comprises a

parallelogram linkage which includes four pivots and a resilient member obliquely arranged within the parallelogram linkage, and one attachment point of the resilient member is displaced in a horizontal direction by a negative offset distance from a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of two of four pivots that are adjacent to the handle assembly.

[0011] Other objects and features of the invention will become apparent by a review of the specification, claims, and appended figures.

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

[0012] All publications, patents, and patent applications mentioned in this specification are herein incorporated by reference to the same extent as if each individual publication, patent, or patent application was specifically and individually indicated to be incorporated by reference.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] The novel features of the invention are set forth with particularity in the appended claims. A better understanding of the features and advantages of the present invention will be obtained by reference to the following detailed description that sets forth illustrative embodiments, in which the principles of the invention are utilized, and the accompanying drawings of which:

[0014] **FIG. 1** shows a high-level schematic diagram of a stabilizing device in accordance with embodiments of the invention;

[0015] **FIG. 2** shows a front view of a stabilizing device in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

[0016] **FIG. 3** shows a perspective view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 2**;

[0017] **FIG. 4** shows a lateral view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 2**;

[0018] **FIG. 5** shows a perspective view of a constant force assembly including a cam and a spring in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

[0019] **FIG. 6** shows a back view of the constant force assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 5**;

[0020] **FIG. 7** shows another perspective view of the constant force assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 5**;

[0021] **FIG. 8** shows an exploded view of the constant force assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 5**;

[0022] **FIG. 9** shows a front view of a payload stabilization assembly being mounted on a handle assembly in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

[0023] **FIG. 10** shows a perspective view of the payload stabilization assembly being mounted on the handle assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 9**;

[0024] **FIG. 11** shows a perspective view of a payload stabilization assembly being mounted on a handle assembly in accordance with another embodiment of the invention;

[0025] **FIG. 12** shows another perspective view of the payload stabilization assembly being mounted on the handle assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 11**;

[0026] **FIG. 13** shows a front view of the payload stabilization assembly being mounted on the handle assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 11**;

[0027] **FIG. 14** shows a perspective view of a payload stabilization assembly being mounted on the handle assembly in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

[0028] **FIG. 15** shows a perspective view of a stabilizing device in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

[0029] **FIG. 16** shows a front view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 15**;

[0030] **FIG. 17** shows a lateral view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 15**;

[0031] **FIG. 18** shows a top view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 15**;

[0032] **FIG. 19** shows a front view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIGs. 15-18** carrying a payload in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

[0033] **FIG. 20** shows a perspective view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIGs. 15-18** carrying a payload in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

[0034] **FIG. 21** shows a perspective view of a stabilizing device including a motor in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

[0035] **FIG. 22** shows a front view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 21**;

[0036] **FIG. 23** shows a perspective view of a stabilizing device in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

[0037] **FIG. 24** shows a front view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 23**;

[0038] **FIG. 25** shows a lateral view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 23**;

[0039] **FIG. 26** shows a perspective view of a constant force assembly in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

[0040] **FIG. 27** shows a lateral view of the constant force assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 26**;

[0041] **FIG. 28** shows a perspective view of a tension spring assembly according to an embodiment of the invention;

[0042] **FIG. 29** shows an exploded view of the tension spring assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 28**;

[0043] **FIG. 30** shows a front view of the tension spring assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 28**;

[0044] **FIG. 31** shows a top view of the tension spring assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 28**;

[0045] **FIG. 32** shows a lateral view of the tension spring assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 28**;

[0046] **FIG. 33** shows a perspective view of a stabilizing device in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;

[0047] **FIG. 34** shows another perspective view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 33**;

[0048] **FIG. 35** shows a top view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 33**;

- [0049] **FIG. 36** shows a front view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 33**;
- [0050] **FIG. 37** shows a lateral view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 33**;
- [0051] **FIG. 38** shows a perspective view of a stabilizing device including a motor in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;
- [0052] **FIG. 39** shows a top view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 38**;
- [0053] **FIG. 40** shows a front view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 38**;
- [0054] **FIG. 41** shows a lateral view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 38**;
- [0055] **FIG. 42** shows a lateral view of a stabilizing device including a parallelogram linkage in an orientation in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;
- [0056] **FIG. 43** shows another lateral view of a stabilizing device including a parallelogram linkage in another orientation in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;
- [0057] **FIG. 44** is an exploded view of a stabilizing device in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;
- [0058] **FIG. 45** is a schematic showing principles of a parallelogram linkage in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;
- [0059] **FIG. 46** is a graph showing relationships between support forces in a vertical direction and elevations of a payload using a parallelogram linkage in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;
- [0060] **FIG. 47** is a graph showing the effect of locations of two attachment points of a resilient member of a parallelogram linkage on support forces and elevations of a payload in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;
- [0061] **FIG. 48** is another graph showing the effect of locations of two attachment points of a resilient member of a parallelogram linkage on support forces and elevations of a payload in accordance with another embodiment of the invention;
- [0062] **FIG. 49** shows an example of a stabilizing device mounted on objects in accordance with an embodiment of the invention;
- [0063] **FIG. 50** illustrates a movable object in accordance with embodiments of the invention; and
- [0064] **FIG. 51** is a schematic illustration by way of block diagram of a system for controlling a movable object in accordance with embodiments of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0065] The systems, devices, and methods of the invention may enable stabilization of a payload in multiple directions, especially in a vertical direction. In particular, the systems, devices and methods of the invention may provide a stabilizing device capable of providing a constant force

that may be used for equipoising a gravity force of an object including a payload to be stabilized in the vertical direction. In this way, a resulting net force of the object in the vertical direction is substantially zero during this balancing or stabilizing process. Therefore, the stability of the payload may be significantly improved since the jitter or shaking due to gravitational effects could be diminished or eliminated, thereby allowing an operator to capture videography or cinematography in a stable manner.

[0066] The stabilizing device herein may include a handle assembly, a payload stabilization assembly and a constant force assembly. The handle assembly may comprise one or more grips configured to permit a user to hold the stabilizing device. The one or more grips may be adjustably connected to a top handle bar or a cross bar of the handle assembly. In some instances, the handle assembly may comprise a single grip that allows a user to hold the stabilizing device using only one hand. The single grip may be pivoted such that it may have different orientations, for example, in accordance with the user's preferences. In some embodiments, the handle assembly may be configured to have a variable orientation relative to the constant force assembly. In addition, the handle assembly may be used as a handle for the payload after the handle assembly is disconnected from the constant force assembly and directly attached to the payload. As such, the handle assembly may be flexibly and/or directly connected with the payload for the user to hold when stabilization is not needed. Additionally, the handle assembly may be disconnected from the payload and then connected to the other components of the stabilizing device for stabilization purposes, for example, to prevent or reduce floating and/or shaking of the payload.

[0067] The handle assembly described herein may be electrically connected with other parts of the stabilizing device. A user can use the handle assembly to control the stabilizing device in a variety of ways. For example, the handle assembly may include a number of control buttons for controlling the movement of the payload, such as the rotation, translation, tilt, ascent, descent, etc. This would be advantageous when the payload is an imaging device, such as a camera configured to follow an object of interest while shooting, since the quality of the photography/videography can be improved by reducing the jitter or shaking of the camera in the vertical direction.

Additionally, the handle assembly may be moved such that the stabilizing device may have different form factors, thereby improving the portability and flexibility of the stabilizing device.

[0068] The payload stabilization assembly herein may be configured to support the payload and permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation. To adequately support the payload, the payload stabilization assembly may include different mechanical structures for stabilizing the payload stable to avoid jitters or wobbles in a horizontal direction. In some embodiments, the payload stabilization assembly may comprise a support bar, a linkage

mechanism and multiple support plates that collectively forms a claw-like structure for supporting the constant force assembly and the payload, such that the payload can move steadily in the vertical direction. The support bar may support the linkage mechanism which may then carry or support the payload. The payload stabilization assembly may further include a multiple-axis gimbal coupled to the payload, that allows the payload to rotate about multiple axes, for example, in a pitch, a yaw or a roll axis, or any combination thereof.

[0069] The constant force assembly herein may be operably connected to the handle assembly and configured to support the payload stabilization assembly. Further, the constant force assembly may be configured to provide a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction, such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero. In some embodiments, the constant force assembly may comprise a parallelogram linkage with a resilient member (such as a plurality of springs) positioned proximately along a diagonal of the parallelogram linkage and four pivots positioned respectively at the four corners of the parallelogram linkage. Attachment points of the resilient member may be selected such that different forces may be generated for supporting the payload to counteract gravitational force in the vertical direction. In some embodiments, the resilient member may be a constant force spring. The constant force spring may comprise a tension spring comprising a rolled metal strip and a spool. Additionally or alternatively, the constant force spring may comprise a volute spring connected with a spiral cam.

[0070] The stabilizing device as described above may further include a variety of sensors. The sensors may recognize movement of the handle assembly, the payload, and the constant force assembly. The sensors may be attached to the handle assembly, frame components, and/or actuator mechanisms, such as one or more motors. The sensors may communicate information to a processor on board or off board the stabilizing device. The processor may use the information from the sensors to detect a change in the orientation of the handle assembly and the payload and cause a subsequent change in the orientation and/or control of at least one of the motors on the stabilization device.

[0071] Embodiments of the invention are described below with reference to the accompanying drawings.

[0072] **FIG. 1** shows a high level schematic of a stabilizing device 101 in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. The stabilizing device **101** may include a handle assembly **102** which may include one or more grips **103** and **104**, a payload stabilization assembly **105**, and a constant force assembly **106**. As shown in **FIG. 1**, the handle assembly may also comprise a top handle bar **107**. The payload stabilization assembly and the constant force assembly may be

carried by or detachably attached to the top handle bar. The stabilizing device may be configured to stabilize a payload **108** in various directions, especially in a vertical direction.

[0073] The handle assembly may be made from a metallic, composite, or plastic material, such as carbon fiber. In some embodiments, the grips mounted to the top handle bar of the handle assembly may be adjustable to provide comfort for the user's grip. The number of grips may be provided based on one or more factors, such as a size, volume, height of the payload to be stabilized, different application requirements and the like. For example, for light or small payloads, a single grip, such as the grip shown in **FIGs. 33** and **34**, may be sufficient for holding and stabilizing purposes. Conversely, for heavy payloads, an additional grip may be mounted to the top handle bar, for example at the middle portion of the top handle bar.

[0074] Depending on the type of applications, control buttons may or may not be provided on the handle assembly for controlling the stabilizing device. For example, in some embodiments, such as a handle assembly with two grips, control over the payload may be implemented using one or more sensors or actuator mechanisms on board the stabilizing device. Alternatively, control over the payload may be implemented using a remote controller via wired or wireless communications. In some embodiments in which the handle assembly has a single grip, such as the grip shown in **FIGs. 33** and **34** and **FIGs. 42** and **43**, a plurality of control buttons may be provided on the handle assembly as a control panel. In this way, the user can control the operations of the payload while the payload is working, such as shooting or taking photos, when the payload is a camera.

[0075] The top handle bar, which may act as a frame assembly, may have a plurality of frame components. The frame components may be rigid parts. The frame components may be configured to move relative to each other. The movement of the components may be about a joint. For example, the joint may be a hinge, ball and socket, plane joint, saddle, or pivot. Movement of the frame components may be controlled by one or more motors. Optionally, one or more motors may be provided at the joints between the components. Each frame component may be moved by one motor or a plurality of frame components may be moved by a single motor. Frame components may be rotated about an axis. Each component may rotate about one, two, three, or more axes. The axis of rotation may be defined in a fixed or non-fixed reference frame. Additionally, the frame components may be configured to translate in at least one direction. The joints may further comprise Hall sensors which may detect the position, and/or rotation of the frame components relative to each other at each joint location.

[0076] The payload stabilization assembly may be used for stabilizing the payload such that the payload moves substantially in a vertical direction, instead of floating or moving around. Therefore, the payload stabilization assembly may include a vertical moving linkage to ensure

vertical translation of the payload. The vertical moving linkage may be configured to restrict unwanted movement of the payload. For example, in some embodiments, the vertical moving linkage may be implemented as a claw-like structure, such as those shown in **FIGs. 9-13**, as described in detail later in the specification. In some embodiments, the payload stabilization assembly may be implemented as a guiding structure, for example as shown in **FIG. 14**. The structure of the payload stabilization assembly may be further simplified, for example, to a support plate or base for supporting the payload, such as those shown in **FIGs. 42 and 43**.

[0077] The constant force assembly may be operably connected to the handle assembly, for example, the top handle bar of the handle assembly, and may be configured to support the payload stabilization assembly. As mentioned before, the constant force assembly may be configured to provide a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction, such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction may be substantially zero. The force as provided may be a resilient force generated by any suitable resilient members. Therefore, the constant force assembly may be designed to have different structures for providing such a constant force.

[0078] In some embodiments, the constant force assembly may be implemented having a volute spring connected with a spiral cam. The resilient force output by the volute spring may equipoise the gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly and the payload, such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero. One possible design of a volute spring and a spiral cam is shown in **FIGs. 2-8**. Additionally or alternatively, a driving unit or mechanism, such as a motor, may be added to drive the payload together with the payload stabilization assembly to return or stop at an expected position. In some embodiments, the constant force assembly may be designed as a combination of a tension spring and a rotatable wire spool, one example of which is illustrated in **FIGs. 23-31**. In some embodiments, the constant force assembly may be implemented having a constant force spring which may be capable of exerting a substantially constant force over its entire range of extension to counteract the gravitational force on the payload stabilization assembly with the payload. One possible design of a constant force spring is shown in **FIGs. 33 and 34**, which will be described in detail later in the specification. The constant force spring may be further driven by a driving unit, such as a motor, to move the payload stabilization and the payload to return or stop at an expected position. An example of this actuation is illustrated in **FIGs. 38-41**.

[0079] The payload may be supported or carried by the payload stabilization assembly, and directly or indirectly connected with the constant force assembly. The payload may be, for example, a camera, a sensor, a passenger, or cargo. In some instances, when embodied as a sensor, the payload may comprise: location sensors (e.g., global positioning system (GPS)

sensors, mobile device transmitters enabling location triangulation), vision sensors (e.g., imaging devices capable of detecting visible, infrared, or ultraviolet light, such as cameras), proximity sensors (e.g., ultrasonic sensors, lidar, time-of-flight cameras), inertial sensors (e.g., accelerometers, gyroscopes, inertial measurement units (IMUs)), altitude sensors, pressure sensors (e.g., barometers), audio sensors (e.g., microphones) or field sensors (e.g., magnetometers, electromagnetic sensors). Sensors of different types may measure different types of signals or information (e.g., position, orientation, velocity, acceleration, proximity, pressure, etc.) and/or utilize different types of measurement techniques to obtain data.

[0080] In an example, the payload may include a camera. The camera may be a film or digital camera. The camera may be able to capture video recordings or still photographs. The camera may be a micro lens camera, a point and shoot camera, a mobile phone camera, a professional video camera, or a camcorder. The camera settings may be controlled by the user via a remote control or user input components built into the stabilizing device. Examples of camera settings may be white balance, aperture size, shutter speed, focal length, zoom, or ISO sensitivity. Further, to enable the camera to shoot in any direction, a gimbal supporting multiple-axis rotation may be introduced to support or carry the camera. In this manner, when performing the stabilizing operations described elsewhere herein, the stabilizing device carrying the camera may permit the operator to capture videography or cinematography in a stable manner.

[0081] The processor may be configured to automatically calculate and/or determine a desired payload orientation without requiring additional input from an external device or user. In some instances, the desired payload orientation may remain substantially constant with respect to the top handle bar or frame assembly used as a reference frame. Alternatively, the desired payload orientation may change with respect to the top handle bar. In other embodiments, the desired payload orientation may be calculated and/or determined based on a signal received from an external device, such as a remote control. Similarly, the desired payload orientation may be calculated and/or determined based on a signal received from a user input interface of the handle assembly, such as one or more control buttons arranged on the handle assembly. For example, the operator of the stabilization platform or another individual operating an external device or remote control may provide input regarding the orientation of the payload with respect to the top handle bar.

[0082] **FIG. 2** shows a front view of a stabilizing device **200** in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. The stabilizing device may comprise a payload stabilization assembly having a claw-like structure, a constant force assembly comprising a cam and a volute spring, and a handle assembly including a top handle bar and two grips each mounted at the corresponding end of the top handle bar.

[0083] As illustrated in **FIG. 2**, the stabilizing device **200** may include a handle assembly **201** having a top handle bar **202** and two grips **203** and **204**, a constant force assembly **205**, and a payload stabilization assembly **206** mounted on and supported by the top handle bar via pipe clamps **207-209**. A gimbal **210**, as a payload for the stabilizing device, may be detachably connected to the payload stabilization assembly. The gimbal may be further connected with the constant force assembly by a drawing member **211**, such as a bracing wire, a steel cable, or a pulling line at an output end of the constant force assembly. The gimbal may be configured to carry a camera **212**, which may be able to rotate in one or more (e.g., three) different axes based on the driving forces from the gimbal. The lifting power or support force from the payload stabilization assembly and the constant force assembly can equipoise the gravity force exerted on the payload including the gimbal and the camera connected thereto with the payload stabilization assembly, thereby balancing and stabilizing the camera in a vertical direction. For a better understanding of the stabilizing principles of the invention, **FIGs. 3** and **4** are also provided which show a perspective view of the stabilizing device and a lateral view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 2**, respectively.

[0084] The following will discuss the details of one example of the constant force assembly as above with reference to **FIGs. 5-8**.

[0085] **FIG. 5** shows a perspective view of a constant force assembly including a cam and a spring in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. The constant force assembly depicted in **FIG. 5** may be similar to the constant force assembly **205** shown in **FIG. 2**. As shown in **FIG. 5**, the constant force assembly may include a pipe clamp **209** for securing the constant force assembly to a top handle bar, a manual adjustment knob **501** with a lead screw, a worm and gear **502**, a spiral cam **503**, a volute spring **504**, a bracing wire support bracket **505**, and a bracing wire **211** for connecting the payload or the payload stabilization assembly. The spiral cam and the volute spring may be connected to each other by a screw or a stop block. By adjusting the manual adjustment knob, the worm and gear may pre-tighten the volute spring. Upon pre-tightening operations by the worm and gear via the manual adjustment knob, the volute spring may have a preload force, which may drive the spiral cam to pull the bracing wire, thereby transferring a resilient force of the volute spring into a pulling force transferred by the bracing wire for counteracting the gravitational force on the payload and the payload stabilization assembly. For further clarity, **FIG. 6** is provided to illustrate a back view of the constant force assembly and **FIG. 7** is provided to illustrate a different perspective view of the constant force assembly.

[0086] **FIG. 8** shows an exploded view of the constant force assembly including the cam and the spring illustrated in **FIGs. 5-7** in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. As illustrated

in **FIG. 8**, the constant force assembly herein may include a box or housing **801** for enclosing the worm and gear **502**, the spiral cam **503**, and the volute spring **504**, resulting in easy installation and carrying (greater portability). Further illustrated in **FIG. 6** are one or more bearings **804** for supporting the bracing wires, two bearing fixed blocks **805** for securing and supporting the lead screw, a spring fixing shaft **802** for securing the volute spring, and multiple bearings **803** for connecting the worm and gear, the spiral cam and the volute spring together. For example, the spiral cam and the volute spring may be connected with each other by a screw, a clip, a fastener, or other mechanical connection mechanism at a location indicated by **806**. The volute spring may be pivotally connected with the worm and gear assembly such that the manual adjustment knob may manually adjust the volute spring via the worm and gear assembly. Through the force applied by the worm and gear assembly, the volute spring may have an initial resilient force or preload force, which may be transferred to the spiral cam. A drawing member, such as the bracing wire (e.g., steel cables) as illustrated herein may be attached to the spiral cam and wound around the spiral cam, and directly connect or indirectly connect via the payload stabilization assembly to the payload. In this way, the resilient force provided by the volute spring may be converted into a constant pulling force for equipoising the gravity force of the payload with the payload stabilization assembly, such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

[0087] Since the volute spring can provide variable forces and the force keeps increasing as the volute spring stretches (i.e., rotates), in order to obtain a constant torque which may produce a constant force to equipoise a corresponding gravity force, a radius of the spiral cam should be designed accordingly. For example, when the volute spring generates a relatively big force due to its elastic deformation or rotation, the spiral cam should be designed as having a corresponding small radius. Likewise, when the volute spring generates a relatively small force due to its elastic deformation or retraction, the spiral cam should be designed as having a corresponding big radius. In this manner, a constant torque may be generated for counteracting the gravity force from the payload and the payload stabilization assembly. Thus, in some embodiments, a formation (e.g., a shape having variable radiuses) of the spiral cam may be designed based on a relationship between a resilient force and a rotation angle of the volute spring, thereby allowing a close fit or matching between the spiral cam and the volute spring.

[0088] An example of the constant force assembly has been described above with reference to **FIGs. 5-8**. The following will describe in detail, with reference to **FIGs. 9 and 10**, one example of the payload stabilization assembly illustrated in **FIGs. 2-4**, i.e., a claw-like structure comprising multiple pairs of link bars.

[0089] **FIG. 9** shows a front view of a payload stabilization assembly being mounted on a handle assembly in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. The payload stabilization assembly in **FIG. 9** may be similar to the payload stabilization assembly **206** shown in **FIG. 2**. As previously described, in some embodiments, the payload stabilization assembly may include a vertical moving linkage to ensure or permit the payload to move steadily in the vertical direction, instead of shifting or deviating from the vertical direction.

[0090] The vertical moving linkage depicted in **FIG. 9** may comprise two pairs of link bars, each pair of link bars including an upper link bar **904** and a lower link bar **905**. One end of the upper link bar and one end of the lower link bar may be pivotally connected at a variable angle and another end of the upper link bar may be secured or attached to the top handle bar **901** by a pipe clamp **903**. Another end of the lower link bar may be attached to a support platform **906**, to which the payload may be detachably connected. An attachment point or hole may be arranged on the support platform such that the drawing member, e.g., the bracing wire or steel cable, may be tied to the attachment point or passed through the hole and attached beneath the support platform. In this manner, when the user is holding the grips **902**, unstable movement in the vertical direction may be counteracted by the lifting power generated by the constant force assembly. The connecting configurations illustrated in **FIG. 9** are only for illustrative purposes, and it is understood that there are other suitable connecting approaches to connect the upper link bar and low link bar together or connect the link bar to the top handle bar or the support platform. For example, other than the hinged connection (that connects between the upper and lower link bars), a threaded connection, a bearing connection or a clamp connection may be selectively used to connect the link bars, the support platform, and the top handle bar together. For a better understanding of the vertical moving linkage, **FIG. 10** is provided to show another perspective view of the payload stabilization assembly being mounted on the handle assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 9**, with more details about the vertical moving linkage.

[0091] **FIG. 11** shows a perspective view of a payload stabilization assembly being mounted on a handle assembly in accordance with another embodiment of the invention. It can be seen that the vertical moving linkage as illustrated in **FIG. 11** may be similar to the one shown in **FIG. 10**, except for an additional (or a third) pair of link bars **1101** whose longitudinal section may be perpendicular to the top link bar. The other two pairs of link bars may be symmetrical about the longitudinal section of the additional (or third) pair of link bars. The pair of link bars **1101** may also be connected to the top handle bar by a pipe clamp or any other suitable fasteners. The lower link bar of the link bars **1101** may also be connected to the support platform. By introducing an additional pair of link bars, the stabilizing effect can be increased and the jitter or shaking caused by a payload with a heavy weight in the horizontal direction can be reduced. For

further clarity, **FIGs. 12 and 13** are provided which respectively show additional details of the three pairs of link bars, wherein **FIG. 12** shows another perspective view of the payload stabilization assembly and **FIG. 13** shows a front view of the payload stabilization assembly as illustrated in **FIG. 11**.

[0092] **FIG. 14** shows a perspective view of a payload stabilization assembly being mounted on the handle assembly in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. In particular, the payload stabilization assembly depicted in **FIG. 14** may include a guiding rail mechanism which may comprise parallel upper guiding rails **1402** and parallel lower guiding rails **1404**, wherein the upper guiding rails may be sheathed into the lower guiding rail which may act as a sliding block and move a support platform **1405** in the vertical direction, for example, when the user holds grips **1403**. For example, in some embodiments, one end of the guiding rail is connected with a top handle bar **1401** and another end of the guiding rail is operably connected with the payload, for example via a support platform. In some embodiments, instead of arranging two opposite guiding rails, a single one guiding rail may be used to direct the payload to move stably in the vertical direction. For example, a gimbal for supporting multiple-axis rotation may be coupled to the support platform and a camera connected with the gimbal may move up and down based on the lifting power provided by the constant force assembly, equipoising the vertical jitter caused by the gravity forces of the camera, the lower guiding rails, and the support platform.

[0093] **FIG. 15** shows a perspective view of a stabilizing device in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. The stabilizing device in **FIG. 15** may be similar to those illustrated in **FIGs. 2-4**, except the constant force assembly in **FIG. 15** is placed at a different side of the top handle bar compared to those shown in **FIGs. 2-4**. Further, in order to more clearly illustrate the stabilizing device of the invention, the payload has been omitted from **FIG. 15**. For further clarity, **FIGs. 16-18** show a front view, a lateral view and a top view of the stabilizing device as illustrated in **FIG. 15**, respectively. Further, **FIGs. 19 and 20** show different views of the stabilizing device after a payload, such as a camera depicted herein, is supported by the payload stabilization assembly.

[0094] **FIG. 21** shows a perspective view of a stabilizing device including a motor in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. The stabilizing device illustrated in **FIG. 21** may be similar to the stabilizing device shown in **FIGs. 15-18** except in **FIG. 21**, a driving unit, such as a motor, may be mounted on the top handle bar. The output shaft of the motor may drive the drawing member, such as the bracing wire or steel cable to move at a suitable speed and may return to an expected location. For example, by setting the rotational speed of the motor, the rotation of the output shaft of the motor may assist the constant force assembly in supporting the payload and the payload stabilization assembly by increasing the lifting power and enable the

payload to stop at an appropriate location, for example, above a first threshold height in order to maintain the elasticity of the stabilizing device, and below a second threshold height to prevent the payload from crashing into the top handle bar. The front view of the stabilizing device including the motor is shown in **FIG. 22** for illustrative purposes.

[0095] A motor as described herein may be an AC motor or a DC motor. Any description herein of a motor may apply to any type of motor or other actuator. Motors may be direct drive motors. Other examples of types of motors may include, but are not limited to brushed or brushless motors, servomotors, switched reluctance motors, stepper motors, or any other types of motors. The motor may be powered by an energy source, such as a battery system, on the stabilizing platform. Alternatively the motor may be powered by a power cord connected to an external power source.

[0096] **FIG. 23** shows a perspective view of a stabilizing device in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. It can be seen that the stabilizing device depicted in **FIG. 23** may be different from the stabilizing device shown in **FIG. 2** due to a different constant force assembly. The constant force assembly may include a tension spring **2301**, a spring adjusting device **2302**, a first drawing member **2303**, a rotatable wire spool **2304**, a cam **2305**, a second drawing member **2306**, a top handle bar **2307**, and grips **2309**. The stabilizing device may support a payload **2308**, which is shown as a gimbal supporting a camera. The output end of the tension spring may be connected to the cam via a first drawing member, such as the bracing wire or steel cable. The cam may be connected with the rotatable wire spool by a bearing connection, such that either one may cause the other to rotate when unstable movements occur in the vertical direction. In some embodiments, based on the resilient force generated by the tension spring, the cam or the rotatable wire spool may drive each other to rotate clockwise or counterclockwise depending on the translation direction of the payload in the vertical direction, i.e., moving upwards or moving downwards. For example, when the user accidentally moves the handle assembly upward, due to the inertial property of a payload, the rotatable wire spool may rotate in a clockwise direction, which may drive the cam to rotate in clockwise direction as well. The tension spring would then be stretched, thereby storing the energy. Likewise, when the user accidentally moves the handle assembly downward, due to the inertial property of a payload, the rotatable wire spool may rotate in a counterclockwise direction, which may drive the cam to rotate in the counterclockwise direction as well. The tension spring would then be retracted, thereby releasing the energy. In this way, the lifting power as transferred on the second drawing member may equipoise the gravity force of the payload together with the payload stabilization assembly, such as the two pairs of link bars illustrated, such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero. The front

and lateral views of the stabilizing device illustrated in **FIG. 23** are respectively shown in **FIGs. 24** and **25**.

[0097] **FIG. 26** shows a perspective view of a constant force assembly in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. The constant force assembly illustrated in **FIG. 26** may be similar to the constant force assembly shown in **FIGs. 23-25** except for the spring adjusting device is omitted in **FIGs. 23-25**. A fixed end of the tension spring is secured by a pipe clamp via a sleeve bearing and a free end of the tension spring is tied to one end of a first drawing member **2303**. Another end of the first drawing member is tied to the cam **2306** at a location indicated by **2602** which is beneath a rotatable wire spool and rotatably connected thereto by a bearing connection or a location pin. When the payload is carried directly or indirectly by a second drawing member **2305** which runs over the rotatable wire spool starting at a location indicated by **2601**, the rotation of the rotatable wire spool, due to vertical unstable movements, may cause the cam beneath the rotatable wire spool to rotate in the same direction, thereby causing the tension spring to stretch or retract. Therefore, the second drawing member may drive the payload to move up and down such that a net force of the payload with the payload stabilization assembly may be substantially zero. The lateral view of the constant force assembly as described above is provided in **FIG. 27**.

[0098] **FIG. 28** shows a perspective view of a tension spring assembly according to an embodiment of the invention. The tension spring assembly depicted in **FIG. 28** may be similar to the tension spring assembly shown in **FIG. 23** and includes more details about the components therein. As illustrated in **FIG. 28**, the tension spring assembly may include a spring rate adjusting clamp **2801**, a spring rate scale plate **2802**, a spring rate adjusting plate **2803**, a pre-tightening adjusting plate **2804**, a tension spring **2805**, a bearing sleeve **2806** and a pipe clamp **2807**. Depending on the magnitude of the gravitational force on the payload with the payload stabilization assembly, a user may adjust the spring rate of the tension spring before mounting it on the top handle bar. For example, by using the spring rate adjusting clamp to clamp the tension spring and putting the spring rate adjusting plate at an appropriate location according to the scales as indicated by the spring rate scale related to the weight, the user may divide the tension spring into two sections and obtain an appropriate spring rate. A first section, such as from the bearing sleeve to the pre-tightening adjusting plate, would be used in the force equipoising operations. Conversely, a second section, such as from the spring rate adjusting plate to the fixed end of the tension spring, need not be used in the force equipoising operations. The pre-tightening adjusting plate may fasten the tension spring on the pipe clamp, which may then be mounted on the top handle bar. Based on the pre-tightening operation of the pre-tightening adjusting plate, the tension spring may have a preload force which may be used to counteract the

gravitational force on the payload with the payload stabilization assembly. The exploded view, the front view, the top view, and the lateral view of the tension spring assembly as described above are respectively shown in **FIGs. 29, 30, 31, and 32** for illustrative purposes.

[0099] It is to be understood that the constant force assemblies described herein (such as a cam and a spring) are merely exemplary and other suitable mechanical structures may also be used. For example, instead of using a tension spring or volute spring, a constant force spring may be used for providing the constant force, such as those shown in **FIGs. 33-41**.

[00100] **FIG. 33** shows a perspective view of a stabilizing device in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. The stabilizing device in **FIG. 33** may include a handle **3301**, a support bar **3302**, a low link bar **3303**, a setscrew **3304**, a first bearing **3305**, an upper link bar **3306**, a second bearing **3307**, a bearing base **3308**, a rotating shaft **3309** of a constant force spring, a constant force spring **3310**, an upper support plate **3311**, a stop block **3312**, and a lower support plate **3313**. The setscrew may be used to connect the upper link bar with the lower link bar. The second bearing supported by the bearing base may be used to support the rotating shaft of the constant force spring. For further clarity, another perspective view of the stabilizing device herein is provided in **FIG. 34** and a top view, a front view and a lateral view of the stabilizing device herein are respectively provided in **FIGs. 35-37**.

[00101] It can be understood from the depiction herein that a constant force assembly may comprise the constant force spring exerting a substantially constant force over its entire range of extension to equipoise the gravity force of a payload stabilization assembly with a payload. The constant force spring may comprise a rolled metal strip and a spool, and an outer end of the rolled metal strip is connected to the payload stabilization assembly. The structure of the constant force spring may be designed to provide an approximate constant force. As the constant force spring elongates within its operating range, the pulling force may increase but the variations of the pulling force are relatively small, thereby balancing the gravitational force on the payload with the payload stabilization assembly. During this process, an elastic force of the constant force spring may be customized or a mass block may be introduced to fine adjust the balanced gravitational force such that an equilibrium point would be at the middle of the stroke length.

[00102] The payload stabilization assembly may further comprise the support bar, a linkage mechanism similar to those discussed with reference to **FIGs. 9 and 10**, the upper support plate for supporting the constant force assembly which includes the constant force spring, and the lower support plate for supporting a payload, wherein one end of the support bar is attached to the handle assembly and another end of the support bar is attached to the linkage mechanism for

securing the payload in the vertical direction such that the payload moves steadily in the vertical direction.

[00103] The linkage mechanism herein may comprise two pairs of link bars at an angle to each other (for example, about 90 degrees), and disposed symmetrically about the support bar, for example, about the longitudinal section of the support bar. The upper link bar and the lower link bar may be connected with one other by a bearing connection. In some embodiments, one end of the lower link bar and the corresponding one end of the upper link bar may be pivotally connected with one another at an angle. Another end of the upper link bar may be attached to the upper support plate and another end of the lower link bar may be attached to the lower support plate. This arrangement of the linkage mechanism may ensure that the payload, which may be supported by the lower support plate, may only move in the vertical direction instead of moving around in other directions.

[00104] The payload may comprise a gimbal connector **3314**, a gimbal **3315** and a camera **3316**. The gimbal connector may be used for detachably connecting the gimbal to the lower support plate and the camera may be carried or supported by the gimbal.

[00105] In some embodiments, the handle assembly and the payload may be electrically connected with one another through electrical wiring passing through the constant force assembly. A user can use the handle assembly to control the movement of the payload. This would be advantageous when the payload is a gimbal carrying a camera, just as shown in **FIG. 33**. For example, a number of control buttons may be provided on the handle assembly as a control panel. A user, by pressing one or more control buttons, may control the rotation of the camera in different axes, such as a pitch axis, a yaw axis and a roll axis, while capturing the videography or cinematography. Due to the stabilizing effect, the camera would become more stable in a fourth axis (i.e., a vertical axis) in addition to the previous three axes, i.e., a pitch axis, a yaw axis and a roll axis.

[00106] To detect or control the movement or rotation of the payload, in some embodiments, the stabilizing device may comprise a set of sensors that may detect rotations of the payload. The stabilizing device may have sensors on the support bars, link bars, handle assemblies, and/or motors, that may detect the rotation of the payload about at least one rotation of axis, such as one or more of the yaw, roll, and pitch axes. For example the sensors may be inertial sensors (e.g., positional or angular displacement sensors, velocity sensors, accelerometers, gyroscopes, and magnetometers), capacitive sensors, Hall sensors, or any other types of sensors as described elsewhere herein.

[00107] In some instances, the sensors may be capable of detecting linear and/or angular displacement, linear velocity and/or angular velocity, or linear or angular acceleration. The

sensors may or may not be provided on any portion of the handle assembly, such as a grip, handle bar, bar, or any other portion. The sensors may or may not be provided on one, two, three or more of the motors. The sensors may or may not be provided on the payload. A processor onboard or off-board the stabilizing device may interpret the sensor data to detect a rotation about a rotation of axis, such as a yaw, roll, or pitch axis. Sensor data from any component of the stabilizing device may be used to detect positional information and/or rotation of the component. Sensor data from multiple components may be gathered and/or compared. In some instances, the sensor data from the components may be used to determine motion of the payload relative to the handle assembly or vice versa, motion of the payload relative to a fixed reference frame, motion of the handle assembly relative to the fixed reference frame, motion of any of the frame components relative to the fixed reference frame or any variation or combination thereof.

[00108] When a processor detects a rotation of the handle assembly indicating a change from a first mode/configuration to a second mode/configuration, the processor may change the motor control orientation. For example in a first mode a first motor may control the yaw axis rotation and a second motor may control the roll axis rotation. When the processor detects a change from a first mode to a second mode, the processor may switch the motor control such that a first motor may control the roll axis rotation and a second motor may control the yaw axis rotation. In a first and second mode, the pitch axis motor control may not change such that a third motor may control the pitch axis rotation in both the first mode and second mode.

[00109] **FIG. 38** shows a perspective view of a stabilizing device including a motor in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. The stabilizing device in **FIG. 38** may be similar to the one shown in **FIGs. 33-37** except that a motor **3081** is disposed on the upper support plate for driving the constant force spring. In some embodiments, to accurately control the rotating speed of the motor, a speed control unit **3802** may also be arranged on the stabilizing device, such as on the upper support plate. In some embodiments, based on instructions from one or more on-board or off-board processors, the speed control unit may control the rotation of the motor, for example, by increasing or decreasing the rotating speed. The rotation of the motor may drive the whole payload to return to an expected position, for example a middle part of the stroke length of the constant force spring, thereby controlling the movement of the payload in the vertical direction and improving the stabilization effect. For further clarity, a top view, a front view, and a lateral view of the stabilizing device are respectively provided in **FIGs. 39-41**.

[00110] A motor as described herein can be an AC motor or DC motor. Any description herein of a motor may apply to any type of motor or other actuator. Motors may be direct drive motors. Other examples of types of motors may include, but are not limited to brushed or brushless motors, servomotors, switched reluctance motors, stepper motors, or any other types of motors.

The motor may be powered by an energy source, such as a battery system, on the stabilizing platform. Alternatively the motor may be powered by a power cord connected to an external power source.

[00111] In addition to the motor that permits the payload to move in a stable manner in the vertical direction (as described above), each rotation axis of the payload may also be controlled by a motor. For instance, a first motor may effect rotation about a yaw axis, a second motor may effect rotation about a roll axis, and a third motor may effect rotation about a pitch axis. The rotation axes of the motors may change depending on various configurations and modes of operation. For example, in the modes where the stabilizing devices according to embodiments of the invention are held by a user using both hands, such as those shown in **FIGs. 2-4** and **23-25**, a first motor may control the yaw axis rotation, a second motor may control the roll axis rotation, and a third motor may control the pitch axis rotation. Alternatively, in a mode where the stabilizing device is held by a user using only one hand, such as those shown in **FIGs. 33-41**, a first motor may control the roll axis rotation, a second motor may control the yaw axis rotation, and a third motor may control the pitch axis rotation.

[00112] **FIG. 42** shows a lateral view of a stabilizing device including a parallelogram linkage in an orientation in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. It can be seen that the stabilizing device illustrated in **FIG. 42** may carry or support a gimbal **4201** with a camera placed thereon. As illustrated, the stabilizing device may include a first long link bar **4202**, a damper **4203**, a gimbal support **4204**, a first short link bar **4205**, a spring **4206**, a second long link bar **4207**, a second short link bar **4208**, an adjusting nut **4209**, an adjustment knob **4210**, and a rotating hinge **4211**, and a handle assembly **4212**.

[00113] The first short link bar may be connected with the gimbal system via the gimbal support, and the second short link bar may be connected with the handle assembly. The spring may be obliquely connected between the short link bar and the long link bar. A stress analysis of this structure reveals that a vertical and lifting force may be generated at the end of the long link bar (i.e., at the first short link bar) by adjusting parameters and connecting locations of the spring, and this force may be adjusted as a constant-force approximately equal to a weight to be balanced or equipoised. Therefore, the stabilizing device may be equivalent to a spring-based dampening system with a weak spring rate, for diminishing the jitter in the vertical direction caused by e.g., human walking, climbing, jumping, or the like. The damper may be used to absorb the energy of the whole system and avoid resonance. In some instances where the system has weak stiffness and requires small damping, it would be hard to cause resonance and therefore the damper may be removed or the damping may be provided by increasing the friction at the hinged joint of the

linkage instead of using a separate damper. In some embodiments, the handle and payload (such as the gimbal system herein) may be dampened as a whole to achieve a better stability.

[00114] As illustrated, the two long link bars and two short link bars may constitute a parallelogram linkage with 1) a resilient member (such as a spring) positioned proximately along a diagonal of the parallelogram linkage and 2) four pivots, each of which may be positioned at a different one of four corners of the parallelogram linkage, i.e., at a joint of the long link bar and the short link bar. The parallelogram linkage may serve as a constant force assembly according to embodiments of the invention. In some embodiments, the spring may be a tension spring having a first end and a second end, and the first end may be attached to the second long link bar at a first attachment point and the second end may be attached to a connector between two pivots that are adjacent to the handle assembly at a second attachment point. The connector may be the adjusting nut as depicted. The adjusting nut may be movably connected with the adjustment knob and the adjustment of the adjustment knob may cause the adjusting nut to move up and down in the vertical direction, thereby changing height of the second attachment point in the vertical direction relative to the pivot. An approximately constant force opposite to the gravitational force on the payload may be generated using the oblique pulling of the spring.

[00115] The force provided by the parallelogram linkage may be determined according to one or more parameters of the tension spring, structural parameters of the parallelogram linkage and positions of the first and second attachment points. In some embodiments, the one or more parameters of the tension spring may comprise at least one of a mean coil diameter, a wire diameter, and the number of coils. In some embodiments, the parallelogram linkage may be configured to have a natural frequency which may be low enough to reduce or eliminate low-frequency jitter in the vertical direction.

[00116] The handle assembly may comprise a single grip which may be hinged to the constant force assembly such that the single grip has a variable orientation relative to the constant force assembly. For example, by partially rotating the grip, it may be oriented perpendicularly to the parallelogram linkage, such as shown in **FIG. 42**, or collinear to the parallelogram linkage, such as shown in **FIG. 43**. The orientation may be selected according to the user's preference.

[00117] In some embodiments, the handle assembly may be used as a handle for the payload after the handle assembly is disconnected from the constant force assembly and directly attached to the payload. For example, after removing the parallelogram linkage and the gimbal support, the gimbal may be directly connected to the grip and therefore the user may hold the grip to perform shooting without taking into account the jitter in the vertical direction. This would be convenient for shooting in an environment where such jitter less occurs, for example, moving indoors or crossing flat lands.

[00118] **FIG. 44** is an exploded view of a stabilizing device carrying a payload in accordance with an embodiment of the invention.

[00119] As illustrated in **FIG. 44**, a gimbal system **4401** including a camera and multiple motors, a fast release inner ring **4402**, a first fast release external ring **4403**, a gimbal connecting circuit board **4404** for providing power supply or transmitting various control signals and a first connector **4405**, which may be connected sequentially on a gimbal support by snap joints or threaded fasteners with possible one or more inside locking blocks or stop blocks. To support the electrical connection between the handle assembly **4414** and gimbal system, flexible printed circuit (FPC) wiring **4408** may be arranged at the bottom of the parallelogram linkage **4407** for signal transmission between the handle assembly and the gimbal system. A linkage support **4409** of the parallelogram linkage may be connected with a handle connector **4410**, a handle connecting circuit board **4411**, a second connector **4412**, and a second fast release external ring **4413** by snap joints, or threaded fasteners with possible one or more inside locking blocks or stop blocks. Upon completing the assembly of all the components, a user may hold, via the handle assembly, the stabilizing device with the parallelogram linkage to conduct shooting, for example, videography in a stable manner.

[00120] **FIG. 45** is a schematic showing a parallelogram linkage in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. It can be seen the parallelogram linkage in **FIG. 45** may be similar to the parallelogram linkage shown in **FIGs. 42-44**.

[00121] As previously described, the parallelogram linkage may comprise four pivots and a resilient member obliquely arranged within the parallelogram linkage. The four pivots may include a first pivot **4501**, a second pivot **4502**, a third pivot **4503**, and a fourth pivot **4504**. The attachment points of the resilient member (e.g., a spring as shown) may comprise a first attachment point **4505** and a second attachment point **4506**.

[00122] The first pivot and the second pivot are configured to be proximal to the handle assembly and vertically aligned with each other at an initial state. The third pivot and the fourth pivot are configured to be proximal to the payload stabilization assembly and vertically aligned with each other at the initial state. The second pivot may be higher than the first pivot in the vertical direction, and the fourth pivot may be higher than the third pivot in the vertical direction. In some embodiments, the resilient member is a tension spring having a first end and a second end, and the first end is attached to a connecting rod (for example, the second long link bar **4207** in **FIG. 42**) connecting the first pivot and third pivot at a first attachment point proximal to the third pivot, and the second end is attached to a connector (for example, the adjusting nut **4209** in **FIG. 42**) between the second pivot and first pivot in the vertical direction at a second attachment point. In some embodiments, the connector may be moveably connected with an adjustment

knob and the adjustment of the adjustment knob may cause the connector to move up and down in the vertical direction, thereby changing the height of the second attachment point in the vertical direction relative to the first pivot.

[00123] As further illustrated in **FIG. 45**, “a” indicated at **4507** may represent a height of the first attachment point from the first pivot. “b” indicated at **4508** may represent a distance between the second attachment point and the first pivot. “d” indicated at **4509** may represent a distance between the second attachment point and a horizontal line passing through the first and third pivots, that is, a distance in a vertical direction from the second attachment point to a horizontal plane passing through the longitudinal axes of the first and third pivots. “e” indicated at **4510** may represent a distance that the first attachment point displaces from a plumb line passing through the first and second pivots, that is, a distance in a horizontal direction from the first attachment point to a vertical plane passing through the longitudinal axes of the first and second pivots. A gravity center of the payload may be represented at **4511** and “g” at **4512** may represent a distance that the gravity center of the payload may displace from the plumb line passing through the third and fourth pivots, that is, a distance in the horizontal direction from the gravity center of the payload to a vertical plane passing through the longitudinal axes of the third and fourth pivots.

[00124] Factors affecting the lifting support of the parallelogram linkage may include spring parameters, structural parameters of the parallelogram linkage, and locations of the attachment points of the spring. A graph of the lifting power or support force versus elevation of the payload, or a graph of the lifting power versus inclined angles of the parallelogram linkage, may be obtained by changing some or all of the above parameters. The graph of the support force versus elevation of the payload is shown in **FIG. 46**, where the short link bars remain vertical and the long link bars remain horizontal, and elevation of the payload is almost zero.

[00125] In order to eliminate the jitter with a low frequency in the vertical direction, the inherent frequency of the parallelogram linkage should be low and therefore the optimal shape of the curve should be approximately horizontal with the left part higher than the right part, as shown in **FIG. 46**. The higher the slope of the curve, the higher the inherent frequency of the linkage.

[00126] Regarding the adjustments of the spring parameters, if the lifting power or support force is satisfied, the effect would be better if the spring is designed with a large to medium diameter, a small wire diameter, and fewer number of turns. Adjusting the height “a” of the attachment point of the spring from the first pivot may change the lifting support. In other words, a vertical distance between the second attachment point and the center of the first pivot may be variable such that the constant force assembly may provide different counteracting forces for gravitational forces on different payloads.

[00127] In some instances, the main parameters affecting the shape of the curve may be the distance “e,” which is a distance in a horizontal direction from the first attachment point to a vertical plane passing through the longitudinal axes of the first and second pivots. When “e” is a positive value, the first attachment point would be within a rectangle enclosed by connecting lines (such as four connecting lines 4513-4516 shown in FIG. 45) connecting four pivots of the parallelogram linkage. When “e” is zero, the first attachment point would be on the connecting line connecting the first and second pivots. When “e” is a negative value, then the first attachment point is outside the rectangle at issue. When the first attachment point is adjacent to the rectangle and at the outside thereof, i.e., “e” is a less negative value, the stabilization effect would be better. In other words, according to the embodiments of the invention, one attachment point of the resilient member is displaced in a horizontal direction by a negative offset distance from a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of two of four pivots that are adjacent to the handle assembly. In some embodiments, the negative offset distance may be in a range of about -2 millimeter (mm) to 0 mm or -0.6 mm to -0.2 mm. In some embodiments, the negative offset distance may be -0.4 mm.

[00128] In some instances, the gravity center of the payload may be displaced from the connecting line connecting the third and fourth pivots (such as the connecting line 4514 shown in FIG. 45) by “g.” When the gravity center of the payload is near or close to the connecting line at issue, the stabilization effect may be better. The optimal position of the payload occurs when the gravity center of the payload is on the connecting line.

[00129] FIG. 47 is a graph showing the effect of locations of two attachment points of a resilient member of a parallelogram linkage on support forces and elevations of a payload in accordance with an embodiment of the invention, where “g”=0, i.e., the distance that the gravity center of the payload may displace from the plumb line passing through the third and fourth pivots is zero. As previously described, the optimal shape of the curve should be approximately horizontal with the left part higher than the right part. According to this rule, it can be found that the curve with “e”= -6 may achieve the best stabilization effect among the four curves. Therefore, in some embodiments, the negative offset distance may be about -0.6 mm.

[00130] FIG. 48 is another graph showing the effect of locations of two attachment points of a resilient member of a parallelogram linkage on support forces and elevations of a payload in accordance with another embodiment of the invention, where “e”=0, i.e., the distance that the first attachment point displaces from a plumb line passing through the first and second pivots is zero. As previously noted, the optimal shape of the curve should be approximately horizontal with the left part higher than the right part. According to this rule, it can be found that the curve with “g”= 0 may achieve the best stabilization effect among the three curves. Therefore, in some

embodiments, a gravity center of the payload may be within a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of two of four pivots that are adjacent to the payload stabilization assembly.

[00131] In addition to providing various embodiments of the stabilizing devices described with reference to **FIGs. 1-48**, the invention may also provide a number of methods for using or operating such stabilizing devices.

[00132] In some embodiments, a method for stabilizing a payload is provided. The method may comprise supporting the payload using a payload stabilization assembly configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation. The method may also comprise providing a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero, using a constant force assembly (1) configured to support the payload stabilization assembly, and (2) operably connected to a handle assembly comprising one or more grips configured to permit a user to support the entirety of the stabilizing device using the one or more grips.

[00133] In some embodiments, a method for stabilizing a payload is provided. The method may comprise supporting the payload using a payload stabilization assembly configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation. The method may also comprise permitting, via the payload stabilization assembly, the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation when directly operably connected to the handle assembly without a constant force assembly being operably connected to the handle assembly. The method may further comprise permitting, via the payload stabilization assembly, the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation when supported by the constant force assembly that is operably connected to the handle assembly, wherein the constant force assembly is configured to provide force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

[00134] In some embodiments, a method of using a constant force assembly to stabilize a payload is provided. The method may comprise permitting the constant force assembly to be detachably connected to a handle assembly of a stabilizing device using a first interface of the constant force assembly, wherein the handle assembly comprises one or more grips. The method may also comprise permitting the constant force assembly to be detachably connected to a payload stabilization assembly of the stabilizing device using a second interface of the constant force assembly, wherein the payload stabilization assembly is configured to support the payload and permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation. The method may further comprise providing a force, using the constant force assembly, that equipoises a gravity force of

the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

[00135] In some embodiments, a method for stabilizing a payload is provided. The method may comprise supporting the payload using a payload stabilization assembly configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation. The method may also comprise providing a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero, using a constant force assembly (1) configured to support the payload stabilization assembly, and (2) operably connected to a handle assembly comprising one or more grips, wherein the constant force assembly comprises a parallelogram linkage which includes four pivots and a resilient member obliquely arranged within the parallelogram linkage, and one attachment point of the resilient member is displaced in a horizontal direction by a negative offset distance from a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of two of four pivots that are adjacent to the handle assembly.

[00136] The methods as discussed above in accordance with the embodiments of the invention may also comprise other steps for implementing one or more stabilizing devices as discussed before and the pertinent descriptions regarding the operations of the stabilizing devices may also be applicable to the methods as discussed above.

[00137] **FIG. 49** shows an example of a stabilizing device mounted on an object in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. The stabilizing device **200** in **FIG. 49** may be similar to the stabilizing device shown in **FIGs. 2-4** and mounted to the object **4901**. Other stabilizing devices according to various embodiments of the present invention may also be capable of being mounted to the object as needed. The object may be a stationary object, or a movable object, such as a vehicle. When the stabilizing device according to the embodiments of the invention is mounted on a vehicle, it may or may not be held by a human user. Alternatively, the stabilizing device may be mounted to a vehicle or any other object using a permanent or temporary attachment. For example, a boom may be provided, from which the stabilizing device may hang. The stabilizing device may be mounted to a front, back, side, top, or bottom of a vehicle. A vehicle may have attachments for a stabilizing device in one or more locations on the vehicle. The vehicle may be a car, truck, bus, trolley, boat, motorcycle, bike, airplane, jet plane, unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), a train, or any other type of vehicle as described elsewhere herein.

[00138] The embodiments of the invention described herein may include multiple stabilizing devices that can be carried by a wide variety of movable objects. Any description herein of an aerial vehicle, such as a UAV, may apply to and be used for any movable object. Any

description herein of an aerial vehicle may apply specifically to UAVs. A movable object of the present invention can be configured to move within any suitable environment, such as in air (e.g., a fixed-wing aircraft, a rotary-wing aircraft, or an aircraft having neither fixed wings nor rotary wings), in water (e.g., a ship or a submarine), on ground (e.g., a motor vehicle, such as a car, truck, bus, van, motorcycle, bicycle; a movable structure or frame such as a stick, fishing pole; or a train), under the ground (e.g., a subway), in space (e.g., a spaceplane, a satellite, or a probe), or any combination of these environments. The movable object can be a vehicle, such as a vehicle described elsewhere herein. In some embodiments, the movable object can be carried by a living subject, or take off from a living subject, such as a human or an animal.

[00139] In some embodiments, when the stabilizing device is about to be mounted on the UAV, the grips previously attached to the handle assembly may be detached therefrom. Therefore, it may reduce the size and volume of the stabilizing devices of the invention. Further, when mounted on the UAV, a remote controller may be shared by the UAV and the stabilizing device according to the embodiments of the invention. Thereby, the user may be able to remotely transmit the instructions to the stabilizing device for, for example, commencing the stabilization operations in the vertical direction or stopping the stabilization operations. In some embodiments, a separate remote controller may be used to independently control the operations of the stabilizing device. Further, the data collected by one or more sensors on the stabilizing device may be forwarded to one or more processors on board the UAV or off board the UAV. Once the processors complete the operations based on the collected data, they may directly transmit the results to the stabilizing device for making a decision related to shooting, when the payload includes a camera. For example, the UAV may instruct one or more motors to rotate such that the camera may be able to shoot images in different directions and with different angles of view.

[00140] FIG. 50 illustrates a movable object 5000 in accordance with embodiments of the invention. Although the movable object 5000 is depicted as an aircraft, this depiction is not intended to be limiting, and any suitable type of movable object can be used, as previously described herein. One of skill in the art would appreciate that any of the embodiments described herein in the context of aircraft systems can be applied to any suitable movable object (e.g., an UAV). In some instances, the payload 5004 may be provided on the movable object 5000 without requiring the carrier 5002. The movable object 5000 may include propulsion mechanisms 5006, a sensing system 5008, and a communication system 5010. In some embodiments, the payload 5004 may be any stabilizing devices as discussed before with respect to accompanying drawings.

[00141] The propulsion mechanisms 5006 can include one or more of rotors, propellers, blades, engines, motors, wheels, axles, magnets, or nozzles, as previously described. The movable

object may have one or more, two or more, three or more, or four or more propulsion mechanisms. The propulsion mechanisms may all be of the same type. Alternatively, one or more propulsion mechanisms can be different types of propulsion mechanisms. The propulsion mechanisms **5006** can be mounted on the movable object **5000** using any suitable means, such as a support element (e.g., a drive shaft) as described elsewhere herein. The propulsion mechanisms **5006** can be mounted on any suitable portion of the movable object **5000**, such on the top, bottom, front, back, sides, or suitable combinations thereof.

[00142] In some embodiments, the propulsion mechanisms **5006** can enable the movable object **5000** to take off vertically from a surface or land vertically on a surface without requiring any horizontal movement of the movable object **5000** (e.g., without traveling down a runway). Optionally, the propulsion mechanisms **5006** can be operable to permit the movable object **5000** to hover in the air at a specified position and/or orientation. One or more of the propulsion mechanisms **5000** may be controlled independently of the other propulsion mechanisms. Alternatively, the propulsion mechanisms **5000** can be configured to be controlled simultaneously.

[00143] For example, the movable object **5000** can have multiple horizontally oriented rotors that can provide lift and/or thrust to the movable object. The multiple horizontally oriented rotors can be actuated to provide vertical takeoff, vertical landing, and hovering capabilities to the movable object **5000**. In some embodiments, one or more of the horizontally oriented rotors may spin in a clockwise direction, while one or more of the horizontally rotors may spin in a counterclockwise direction. For example, the number of clockwise rotors may be equal to the number of counterclockwise rotors. The rotation rate of each of the horizontally oriented rotors can be varied independently in order to control the lift and/or thrust produced by each rotor, and thereby adjust the spatial disposition, velocity, and/or acceleration of the movable object **5000** (e.g., with respect to up to three degrees of translation and up to three degrees of rotation).

[00144] The sensing system **5008** can include one or more sensors that may sense the spatial disposition, velocity, and/or acceleration of the movable object **5000** (e.g., with respect to up to three degrees of translation and up to three degrees of rotation). The one or more sensors can include global positioning system (GPS) sensors, motion sensors, inertial sensors, proximity sensors, or image sensors. The sensing data provided by the sensing system **5008** can be used to control the spatial disposition, velocity, and/or orientation of the movable object **5000** (e.g., using a suitable processing unit and/or control module, as described below).

[00145] Alternatively, the sensing system **5008** can be used to provide data regarding the environment surrounding the movable object, such as weather conditions, proximity to potential obstacles, location of geographical features, location of manmade structures, and the like. In

some embodiments, the sensing system herein may be able to provide data about the location of the payload supported by the payload stabilization assembly and connected with the constant force assembly. Therefore, by driving operations of one or more driving units, the payload together with the payload stabilization assembly may return an expected position.

[00146] The communication system **5010** enables communication with terminal **5012** having a communication system **5014** via wireless signals **5016**. The communication systems **5010** and **5014** may include any number of transmitters, receivers, and/or transceivers suitable for wireless communication. The communication may be one-way communication, such that data can be transmitted in only one direction. For example, one-way communication may involve only the movable object **5000** transmitting data to the terminal **5012**, or vice-versa. The data may be transmitted from one or more transmitters of the communication system **5010** to one or more receivers of the communication system **5012**, or vice-versa.

[00147] Alternatively, the communication may be two-way communication, such that data can be transmitted in both directions between the movable object **5000** and the terminal **5012**. The two-way communication can involve transmitting data from one or more transmitters of the communication system **5010** to one or more receivers of the communication system **5014**, and vice-versa. In some embodiments, the data regarding the movement of the payload in the vertical direction may also be transmitted by the communication system **5010** to the terminal **5012**. Thereby, the terminal user may be able to control the vertical movement of the payload by controlling one or more relevant motors such that the jitter or shaking in the vertical direction could be equiposed by the constant force assembly according to the embodiments of the invention such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

[00148] In some embodiments, the terminal **5012** can provide control data to one or more of the movable object **5000**, carrier **5002**, and payload **5004** and receive information from one or more of the movable object **5000**, carrier **5002**, and payload **5004** (e.g., position and/or motion information of the movable object, carrier or payload; data sensed by the payload such as image data captured by a payload camera). In some instances, control data from the terminal may include instructions for relative positions, movements, actuations, or controls of the movable object, carrier and/or payload.

[00149] For example, the control data may result in a modification of the location and/or orientation of the movable object (e.g., via control of the propulsion mechanisms **5006**), or a movement of the payload with respect to the movable object (e.g., via control of the carrier **5002**). The control data from the terminal may result in control of the payload, such as control of the operation of a camera or other image capturing device (e.g., taking still or moving pictures,

zooming in or out, turning on or off, switching imaging modes, change image resolution, changing focus, changing depth of field, changing exposure time, changing viewing angle or field of view). In some instances, the communications from the movable object, carrier and/or payload may include information from one or more sensors (e.g., of the sensing system **5008** or of the payload **5004**). The communications may include sensed information from one or more different types of sensors (e.g., GPS sensors, motion sensors, inertial sensor, proximity sensors, or image sensors). Such information may pertain to the position (e.g., location, orientation), movement, or acceleration of the movable object, carrier and/or payload. Such information from a payload may include data captured by the payload or a sensed state of the payload. The control data provided transmitted by the terminal **5012** can be configured to control a state of one or more of the movable object **5000**, carrier **5002**, or payload **5004**. Alternatively or in combination, the carrier **5002** and payload **5004** can also each include a communication module configured to communicate with terminal **5012**, such that the terminal can communicate with and control each of the movable object **5000**, carrier **5002**, and payload **5004** independently.

[00150] In some embodiments, the movable object **5000** can be configured to communicate with another remote device in addition to the terminal **5012**, or instead of the terminal **5012**. The terminal **5012** may also be configured to communicate with another remote device as well as the movable object **5000**. For example, the movable object **5000** and/or terminal **5012** may communicate with another movable object, or a carrier or payload of another movable object. When desired, the remote device may be a second terminal or other computing device (e.g., computer, laptop, tablet, smartphone, or other mobile device). The remote device can be configured to transmit data to the movable object **5000**, receive data from the movable object **5000**, transmit data to the terminal **5012**, and/or receive data from the terminal **5012**. Optionally, the remote device can be connected to the Internet or other telecommunications network, such that data received from the movable object **1500** and/or terminal **5012** can be uploaded to a website or server.

[00151] **FIG. 51** is a schematic illustration by way of block diagram of a system **5100** for controlling a movable object, in accordance with embodiments. The system **5100** can be used in combination with any suitable embodiment of the systems, devices, and methods disclosed herein. The system **5100** can include a sensing module **5102**, processing unit **5104**, non-transitory computer readable medium **5106**, control module **5108**, and communication module **5110**.

[00152] The sensing module **5102** can utilize different types of sensors that collect information relating to the movable objects in different ways. Different types of sensors may sense different types of signals or signals from different sources. For example, the sensors can include inertial sensors, GPS sensors, proximity sensors (e.g., lidar), or vision/image sensors (e.g., a camera).

The sensing module **5102** can be operatively coupled to a processing unit **5104** having a plurality of processors. In some embodiments, the sensing module can be operatively coupled to a transmission module **5112** (e.g., a Wi-Fi image transmission module) configured to directly transmit sensing data to a suitable external device or system. For example, the transmission module **5112** can be used to transmit images captured by a camera of the sensing module **5102** to a remote terminal.

[00153] The processing unit **5104** can have one or more processors, such as a programmable processor (e.g., a central processing unit (CPU)). The processing unit **5104** can be operatively coupled to a non-transitory computer readable medium **5106**. The non-transitory computer readable medium **5106** can store logic, code, and/or program instructions executable by the processing unit **5104** for performing one or more steps. The non-transitory computer readable medium can include one or more memory units (e.g., removable media or external storage such as an SD card or random access memory (RAM)). In some embodiments, data from the sensing module **5102** can be directly conveyed to and stored within the memory units of the non-transitory computer readable medium **5106**. The memory units of the non-transitory computer readable medium **5106** can store logic, code and/or program instructions executable by the processing unit **5104** to perform any suitable embodiment of the methods described herein. For example, the processing unit **5104** can be configured to execute instructions causing one or more processors of the processing unit **5104** to analyze sensing data produced by the sensing module. The memory units can store sensing data from the sensing module to be processed by the processing unit **5104**. In some embodiments, the memory units of the non-transitory computer readable medium **5106** can be used to store the processing results produced by the processing unit **5104**.

[00154] In some embodiments, the processing unit **5104** can be operatively coupled to a control module **5108** configured to control a state of the movable object. For example, the control module **5108** can be configured to control the propulsion mechanisms of the movable object to adjust the spatial disposition, velocity, and/or acceleration of the movable object with respect to six degrees of freedom. Alternatively or in combination, the control module **5108** can control one or more of a state of a carrier, payload, or sensing module.

[00155] The processing unit **5104** can be operatively coupled to a communication module **5110** configured to transmit and/or receive data from one or more external devices (e.g., a terminal, display device, or other remote controller). Any suitable means of communication can be used, such as wired communication or wireless communication. For example, the communication module **5110** can utilize one or more of local area networks (LAN), wide area networks (WAN), infrared, radio, WiFi, point-to-point (P2P) networks, telecommunication networks, cloud

communication, and the like. Optionally, relay stations, such as towers, satellites, or mobile stations, can be used. Wireless communications can be proximity dependent or proximity independent. In some embodiments, line-of-sight may or may not be required for communications. The communication module **5110** can transmit and/or receive one or more of sensing data from the sensing module **5102**, processing results produced by the processing unit **5104**, predetermined control data, user commands from a terminal or remote controller, and the like.

[00156] The components of the system **5100** can be arranged in any suitable configuration. For example, one or more of the components of the system **5100** can be located on the movable object, carrier, payload, terminal, sensing system, or an additional external device in communication with one or more of the above. Additionally, although **FIG. 51** depicts a single processing unit **5104** and a single non-transitory computer readable medium **5106**, one of skill in the art would appreciate that this is not intended to be limiting, and that the system **5100** can include a plurality of processing units and/or non-transitory computer readable media. In some embodiments, one or more of the plurality of processing units and/or non-transitory computer readable media can be situated at different locations, such as on the movable object, carrier, payload, terminal, sensing module, additional external device in communication with one or more of the above, or suitable combinations thereof, such that any suitable aspect of the processing and/or memory functions performed by the system **5100** can occur at one or more of the aforementioned locations.

[00157] Any description herein of a carrier may apply to the stabilizing devices as described or any other type of carrier.

[00158] While preferred embodiments of the present invention have been shown and described herein, it will be obvious to those skilled in the art that such embodiments are provided by way of example only. Numerous variations, changes, and substitutions will now occur to those skilled in the art without departing from the invention. It should be understood that various alternatives to the embodiments of the invention described herein may be employed in practicing the invention. It is intended that the following claims define the scope of the invention and that methods and structures within the scope of these claims and their equivalents be covered thereby.

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A stabilizing device for stabilizing a payload, the stabilizing device comprising:
a handle assembly comprising one or more grips configured to permit a user to support the entirety of the stabilizing device using the one or more grips;
a payload stabilization assembly configured to support the payload and permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation; and
a constant force assembly operably connected to the handle assembly and configured to support the payload stabilization assembly, wherein the constant force assembly is configured to provide a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.
2. The stabilizing device of claim 1, wherein the stabilizing device permits vertical movement of the payload.
3. The stabilizing device of claim 1, wherein the constant force assembly comprises a constant force spring exerting a substantially constant force over its entire range of extension to equipoise the gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload.
4. The stabilizing device of claim 3, wherein the constant force spring comprises a rolled metal strip and a spool, and an outer end of the rolled metal strip is connected to the payload stabilization assembly.
5. The stabilizing device of claim 4, wherein the spool is driven by a motor to unroll the rolled strip in the vertical direction to an expected position.
6. The stabilizing device of claim 1, wherein the payload stabilization assembly comprise a support bar, a linkage mechanism, an upper support plate for supporting the constant force assembly and a lower support plate for supporting the payload, wherein one end of the support bar is attached to the handle assembly and another end of the support bar is attached to the linkage mechanism for securing the payload in the vertical direction such that the payload moves steadily in the vertical direction.
7. The stabilizing device of claim 6, wherein the linkage mechanism comprises two pairs of link bars, which are angled by 90 degrees and are symmetric about the support bar, and either pair of link bars comprises an upper link bar and a lower link bar, and wherein one end of the upper link bar is pivotally connected with one end of the lower link bar, and another end of the upper link bar is attached to the upper support plate, and another end of the lower link bar is attached to the lower support plate such that the upper link bar and the lower link bar are angled.

8. The stabilizing device of claim 6, wherein the lower support plate is detachably connected with a gimbal by which the payload is carried.
9. The stabilizing device of claim 1, wherein the constant force assembly comprises a parallelogram linkage with 1) a resilient member positioned proximately along a diagonal of the parallelogram linkage and 2) four pivots, each of which is positioned at a different one of four corners of the parallelogram linkage.
10. The stabilizing device of claim 9, wherein the four pivots comprise a first pivot, a second pivot, a third pivot and a fourth pivot, and wherein the first pivot and the second pivot are configured to be proximal to the handle assembly and to be vertically aligned with one another at an initial state, and wherein the third pivot and the fourth pivot are configured to be proximal to the payload stabilization assembly and to be vertically aligned with one another at the initial state, and the second pivot is higher than the first pivot in the vertical direction and the fourth pivot is higher than the third pivot in the vertical direction.
11. The stabilizing device of claim 10, wherein the resilient member is a tension spring having a first end and a second end, and the first end is attached to a connecting rod connecting the first pivot and third pivot at a first attachment point proximal to the third pivot, and the second end is attached to a connector between the second pivot and first pivot in the vertical direction at a second attachment point.
12. The stabilizing device of claim 11, wherein the connector is moveably connected with an adjustment knob and the adjustment of the adjustment knob causes the connector to move up and down in the vertical direction, thereby changing height of the second attachment point in the vertical direction relative to the first pivot.
13. The stabilizing device of claim 11, wherein the second attachment point is offset in a vertical direction by a distance from a horizontal plane passing through longitudinal axes of the first pivot and the third pivot.
14. The stabilizing device of claim 11, wherein the first attachment point is on a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of the first pivot and the second pivot.
15. The stabilizing device of claim 11, wherein the first attachment point is offset in a horizontal direction by a distance from a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of the first pivot and the second pivot.
16. The stabilizing device of claim 11, wherein a vertical distance between the second attachment point and the center of the first pivot is variable such that the constant force assembly provides different forces for different payloads having different gravity forces.

17. The stabilizing device of claim 11, wherein a gravity center of the payload is offset by a distance in a horizontal direction from a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of the third pivot and the fourth pivot.
18. The stabilizing device of claim 11, wherein a gravity center of the payload is on a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of the third pivot and the fourth pivot.
19. The stabilizing device of claim 11, wherein the force provided by the parallelogram linkage is determined according to one or more parameters of the tension spring, structural parameters of the parallelogram linkage and positions of the first and second attachment points.
20. The stabilizing device of claim 19, wherein the one or more parameters of the tension spring comprise at least one of a mean coil diameter, a wire diameter and the number of coils.
21. The stabilizing device of claim 9, wherein in the parallelogram linkage is configured to have a natural frequency which is low enough to reduce or eliminate low-frequency jitter in the vertical direction.
22. The stabilizing device of claim 1, wherein the handle assembly and the payload are electrically connected with one another through electrical wiring passing through the constant force assembly.
23. The stabilizing device of claim 22, wherein one or more control buttons are arranged on the one or more grips for controlling rotations of the payload about at least one axis.
24. The stabilizing device of claim 1, wherein the handle assembly comprises a single grip which is hinged to the constant force assembly such that the single grip has a variable orientation relative to the constant force assembly.
25. The stabilizing device of claim 1, wherein the handle assembly is used as a handle for the payload after the handle assembly is disconnected from the constant force assembly and directly attached to the payload.
26. The stabilizing device of claim 1, wherein the handle assembly is configured to have a variable orientation relative to the constant force assembly.
27. A method for stabilizing a payload, the method comprising:
supporting the payload using a payload stabilization assembly configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation; and
providing a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero, using a constant force assembly (1) configured to support the payload stabilization assembly, and (2) operably

connected to a handle assembly comprising one or more grips configured to permit a user to support the entirety of the stabilizing device using the one or more grips.

28. The method of claim 27, wherein the stabilizing device permits vertical movement of the payload.

29. The method of claim 27, wherein the constant force assembly comprises a constant force spring exerting a substantially constant force over its entire range of extension to equipoise the gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload.

30. The method of claim 28, wherein the constant force spring comprises a rolled metal strip and a spool, and an outer end of the rolled metal strip is connected to the payload stabilization assembly.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the spool is driven by a motor to unroll the rolled strip in the vertical direction to an expected position.

32. The method of claim 27, wherein the payload stabilization assembly comprise a support bar, a linkage mechanism, an upper support plate for supporting the constant force assembly and a lower support plate for supporting the payload, wherein one end of the support bar is attached to the handle assembly and another end of the support bar is attached to the linkage mechanism for securing the payload in the vertical direction such that the payload moves steadily in the vertical direction.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein the linkage mechanism comprises two pairs of link bars, which are angled by 90 degrees and are symmetric about the support bar, and either pair of link bars comprises an upper link bar and a lower link bar, and wherein one end of the upper link bar is pivotally connected with one end of the lower link bar, and another end of the upper link bar is attached to the upper support plate, and another end of the lower link bar is attached to the lower support plate such that the upper link bar and the lower link bar are angled.

34. The method of claim 32, wherein the lower support plate is detachably connected with a gimbal by which the payload is carried.

35. The method of claim 27, wherein the constant force assembly comprises a parallelogram linkage with 1) a resilient member positioned proximately along a diagonal of the parallelogram linkage and 2) four pivots, each of which is positioned at a different one of four corners of the parallelogram linkage.

36. The method of claim 35, wherein the four pivots comprise a first pivot, a second pivot, a third pivot and a fourth pivot, and wherein the first pivot and the second pivot are configured to be proximal to the handle assembly and to be vertically aligned with one another at an initial state, and wherein the third pivot and the fourth pivot are configured to be proximal to the payload stabilization assembly and to be vertically aligned with one another at the initial state,

and the second pivot is higher than the first pivot in the vertical direction and the fourth pivot is higher than the third pivot in the vertical direction.

37. The method of claim 36, wherein the resilient member is a tension spring having a first end and a second end, and the first end is attached to a connecting rod connecting the first pivot and third pivot at a first attachment point proximal to the third pivot, and the second end is attached to a connector between the second pivot and first pivot in the vertical direction at a second attachment point.

38. The method of claim 37, wherein the connector is moveably connected with an adjustment knob and the adjustment of the adjustment knob causes the connector to move up and down in the vertical direction, thereby changing height of the second attachment point in the vertical direction relative to the first pivot.

39. The method of claim 37, wherein the second attachment point is offset in a vertical direction by a distance from a horizontal plane passing through longitudinal axes of the first pivot and the third pivot.

40. The method of claim 37, wherein the first attachment point is on a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of the first pivot and the second pivot.

41. The method of claim 37, wherein the first attachment point is offset in a horizontal direction by a distance from a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of the first pivot and the second pivot.

42. The method of claim 37, wherein a vertical distance between the second attachment point and the center of the first pivot is variable such that the constant force assembly provides different forces for different payloads having different gravity forces.

43. The method of claim 37, wherein a gravity center of the payload is offset by a distance in a horizontal direction from a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of the third pivot and the fourth pivot.

44. The method of claim 37, wherein a gravity center of the payload is on a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of the third pivot and the fourth pivot.

45. The method of claim 37, wherein the force provided by the parallelogram linkage is determined according to one or more parameters of the tension spring, structural parameters of the parallelogram linkage and positions of the first and second attachment points.

46. The method of claim 45, wherein the one or more parameters of the tension spring comprise at least one of a mean coil diameter, a wire diameter and the number of coils.

47. The method of claim 35, wherein in the parallelogram linkage is configured to have a natural frequency which is low enough to reduce or eliminate low-frequency jitter in the vertical direction.

48. The method of claim 27, wherein the handle assembly and the payload are electrically connected with one another through electrical wiring passing through the constant force assembly.

49. The method of claim 48, wherein one or more control buttons are arranged on the one or more grips for controlling rotations of the payload about at least one axis.

50. The method of claim 27, wherein the handle assembly comprises a single grip which is hinged to the constant force assembly such that the single grip has a variable orientation relative to the constant force assembly.

51. The method of claim 27, wherein the handle assembly is used as a handle for the payload after the handle assembly is disconnected from the constant force assembly and directly attached to the payload.

52. The method of claim 27, wherein the handle assembly is configured to have a variable orientation relative to the constant force assembly.

53. A stabilizing device for stabilizing a payload, the stabilizing device comprising:
a handle assembly comprising one or more grips; and
a payload stabilization assembly configured to support the payload and permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation,

wherein the payload stabilization assembly is configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation when directly operably connected to the handle assembly without a constant force assembly being operably connected to the handle assembly,

wherein the payload stabilization assembly is configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation when supported by the constant force assembly that is operably connected to the handle assembly, and

wherein the constant force assembly is configured to provide a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

54. The stabilizing device of claim 53, wherein the handle assembly comprises a top handle bar and the constant force assembly comprises a constant force spring assembly mounted on the top handle bar and exerting a substantially constant force over its entire range of extension to equipoise the gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload.

55. The stabilizing device of claim 54, wherein the constant force spring comprises a tension spring comprised of a rolled metal strip and a spool, and an outer end of the rolled metal strip is connected to the payload stabilization assembly.

56. The stabilizing device of claim 55, wherein the spool is driven by a motor to unroll the rolled metal strip in the vertical direction to an expected position.

57. The stabilizing device of claim 55, wherein a spring rate of the tension spring is manually adjustable according to a weight of the payload.

58. The stabilizing device of claim 54, wherein the constant force spring assembly comprises a volute spring and a spiral cam connected with each other, and one end of a drawing member is fixed to an output end of the spiral cam and another end of the drawing member is connected with the payload through winding around the spiral cam.

59. The stabilizing device of claim 58, wherein the other end of the drawing member is connected with the payload via a support platform to which the payload is detachably secured.

60. The stabilizing device of claim 58, wherein a formation of the spiral cam is based on a relationship between a resilient force and a rotation angle of the volute spring.

61. The stabilizing device of claim 58, wherein a resilient force generated by the volute spring is adjustable by a manual adjustment knob via a worm and gear assembly.

62. The stabilizing device of claim 58, wherein the spiral cam is driven by a motor such that the payload together with the payload stabilization assembly returns at an expected position in each stabilization.

63. The stabilizing device of claim 54, wherein the constant force spring assembly comprises a tension spring and one end of the tension spring is mounted on the top handle bar and another end of the tension spring is connected with a cam by a first drawing member, and one end of a second drawing member is connected with a rotatable wire spool which is mounted on the top handle bar and movably connected with the cam, and another end of the second drawing member is connected with the payload stabilization assembly.

64. The stabilizing device of claim 53, wherein the handle assembly comprises a top handle bar connecting two grips and the payload stabilization assembly comprises a vertical moving linkage operably connected to the top handle bar for permitting the payload to move steadily in the vertical direction.

65. The stabilizing device of claim 64, wherein the vertical moving linkage comprises at least two pairs of link bars, which are connected to a support platform and symmetrical about the support platform, and each pair of link bars comprises an upper link bar and a lower link bar, and wherein one end of the upper link bar is pivotally connected with one end of the lower link bar, and another end of the upper link bar is attached to the top handle bar, and another end of the lower link bar is attached to the support platform to which the payload is detachably connected.

66. The stabilizing device of claim 65, wherein the vertical moving linkage comprises a third pair of link bars which are connected to the support platform and the top handle bar and angled with the other two pairs of link bars.

67. The stabilizing device of claim 64, wherein the vertical moving linkage comprises at least one guiding rail and one end of the guiding rail is connected with the top handle bar and another end of the guiding rail is operably connected with the payload.

68. The stabilizing device of claim 67, wherein the other end of the guiding rail is operably connected with a support platform to which the payload is detachably connected such that the support platform and the payload are permitted to move steadily in the vertical direction.

69. The stabilizing device of claim 67, wherein two parallel guiding rails are applied to operably connected with a support platform to which the payload is detachably connected such that the support platform and the payload are permitted to move steadily in the vertical direction.

70. The stabilizing device of claim 53, wherein the payload is a gimbal having at least one axis of rotation.

71. A method for stabilizing a payload, the method comprising:
supporting the payload using a payload stabilization assembly configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation;
permitting, via the payload stabilization assembly, the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation when directly operably connected to the handle assembly without a constant force assembly being operably connected to the handle assembly; and
permitting, via the payload stabilization assembly, the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation when supported by the constant force assembly that is operably connected to the handle assembly,

wherein the constant force assembly is configured to provide force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

72. The method of claim 71, wherein the handle assembly comprises a top handle bar and the constant force assembly comprises a constant force spring assembly mounted on the top handle bar and exerting a substantially constant force over its entire range of extension to equipoise the gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload.

73. The method of claim 72, wherein the constant force spring comprises a tension spring comprised of a rolled metal strip and a spool, and an outer end of the rolled metal strip is connected to the payload stabilization assembly.

74. The method of claim 72, wherein the spool is driven by a motor to unroll the rolled metal strip in the vertical direction to an expected position.

75. The method of claim 73, wherein a spring rate of the tension spring is manually adjustable according to a weight of the payload.

76. The method of claim 72, wherein the constant force spring assembly comprises a volute spring and a spiral cam connected with each other, and one end of a drawing member fixed to an output end of the spiral cam and another end of the drawing member is connected with the payload through winding around the spiral cam.

77. The method of claim 76, wherein the other end of the drawing member is connected with the payload via a support platform to which the payload is detachably secured.

78. The method of claim 76, wherein a formation of the spiral cam is based on a relationship between a resilient force and a rotation angle of the volute spring.

79. The method of claim 76, wherein a resilient force generated by the volute spring is adjustable by a manual adjustment knob via a worm and gear assembly.

80. The method of claim 76, wherein the spiral cam is driven by a motor such that the payload together with the payload stabilization assembly returns at an expected position after stabilization.

81. The method of claim 72, wherein the constant force spring assembly comprises a tension spring and one end of the tension spring is mounted on the top handle bar and another end of the tension spring is connected with a cam by a first drawing member, and one end of a second drawing member is connected with a rotatable wire spool which is mounted on the top handle bar and movably connected with the cam, and another end of the second drawing member is connected with the payload stabilization assembly.

82. The method of claim 71, wherein the handle assembly comprises a top handle bar connecting two grips and the payload stabilization assembly comprises a vertical moving linkage operably connected to the top handle bar for permitting the payload to move steadily in the vertical direction.

83. The method of claim 82, wherein the handle assembly comprises a top handle bar connecting two grips and the payload stabilization assembly comprises a vertical moving linkage operably connected to the top handle bar for permitting the payload to move steadily in the vertical direction.

84. The method of claim 83, wherein the vertical moving linkage comprises at least two pairs of link bars, which are connected to a support platform and symmetrical about the support platform, and each pair of link bars comprises an upper link bar and a lower link bar, and wherein one end of the upper link bar is pivotally connected with one end of the lower link bar,

and another end of the upper link bar is attached to the top handle bar, and another end of the lower link bar is attached to the support platform to which the payload is detachably connected.

85. The method of claim 84, wherein the vertical moving linkage comprises a third pair of link bars which are connected to the support platform and the top handle bar and angled with the other two pairs of link bars.

86. The method of claim 83, wherein the vertical moving linkage comprises at least one guiding rail and one end of the guiding rail is connected with the top handle bar and another end of the guiding rail is operably connected with the payload.

87. The method of claim 86, wherein the other end of the guiding rail is operably connected with a support platform to which the payload is detachably connected such that the support platform and the payload are permitted to move steadily in the vertical direction.

88. The method of claim 86, wherein two parallel guiding rails are applied to operably connected with a support platform to which the payload is detachably connected such that the support platform and the payload are permitted to move steadily in the vertical direction.

89. The method of claim 71, wherein the payload is a gimbal having at least one axis of rotation.

90. A constant force assembly configured for use in a stabilizing device for stabilizing a payload, the constant force assembly comprising:

- a first interface permitting the constant force assembly to be detachably connected to a handle assembly of the stabilizing device, wherein the handle assembly comprises one or more grips; and

- a second interface permitting the constant force assembly to be detachably connected to a payload stabilization assembly of the stabilizing device and configured to support the payload stabilization assembly, wherein the payload stabilization assembly is configured to support the payload and permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation; and

- a constant force mechanism configured to provide a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

91. The constant force assembly of claim 90, wherein the handle assembly comprises a top handle bar and the first interface comprises a constant force spring assembly mounted on the top handle bar and exerting a substantially constant force over its entire range of extension to equipoise the gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload.

92. The constant force assembly of claim 91, wherein the constant force spring assembly comprises a tension spring comprised of a rolled metal strip and a spool, and an outer

end of the rolled metal strip, which is used as the second interface, is connected to the payload stabilization assembly.

93. The constant force assembly of claim 92, wherein the spool is driven by a motor to unroll the rolled metal strip in the vertical direction to an expected position.

94. The constant force assembly of claim 92, wherein a spring rate of the tension spring is manually adjustable according to a weight of the payload.

95. The constant force assembly of claim 92, wherein the outer end of the rolled metal strip is connected with a support platform to which the payload is detachably connected.

96. The constant force assembly of claim 91, wherein the constant force spring assembly comprises a volute spring and a spiral cam connected with each other, and one end of a drawing member, used as the second interface, is fixed to an output end of the spiral and another end of the drawing member is connected with the payload stabilization through winding around the spiral cam.

97. The constant force assembly of claim 96, wherein the other end of the drawing member is connected with a support platform to which the payload is detachably connected.

98. The constant force assembly of claim 96, wherein a formation of the spiral cam is based on a relationship between a resilient force and a rotation angle of the volute spring.

99. The constant force assembly of claim 96, wherein a resilient force generated by the volute spring is adjustable by a manual adjustment knob via a worm and gear assembly.

100. The constant force assembly of claim 96, wherein the spiral cam is driven by a motor such that the payload together with the payload stabilization assembly returns at an expected position in each stabilization.

101. The constant force assembly of claim 91, wherein the constant force spring assembly comprises a tension spring and one end of the tension spring is mounted on the top handle bar as the first interface and another end of the tension spring is connected with a cam by a first drawing member and one end of a second drawing member is connected with a rotatable wire spool which is mounted on the top handle bar and movably connected with the cam, and another end of the second drawing member is connected with the payload stabilization assembly as the second interface.

102. The constant force assembly of claim 90, wherein the handle assembly comprises a top handle bar connecting two grips and the payload stabilization assembly comprises a vertical moving linkage operably connected to the top handle bar for permitting the payload to move steadily in the vertical direction.

103. The constant force assembly of claim 102, wherein the vertical moving linkage comprises at least two pairs of link bars, which are connected to a support platform and

symmetrical about the support platform, and each pair of link bars comprises an upper link bar and a lower link bar, and wherein one end of the upper link bar is pivotally connected with one end of the lower link bar, and another end of the upper link bar is fixedly attached to the top handle bar, and another end of the lower link bar is fixedly attached to the support platform to which the payload is detachably connected.

104. The constant force assembly of claim 103, wherein the vertical moving linkage comprises a third pair of link bars which are connected to the support platform and the top handle bar and angled with the other two pairs of link bars.

105. The constant force assembly of claim 102, wherein the vertical moving linkage comprises at least one guiding rail and one end of the guiding rail is connected with the top handle bar and another end of the guiding rail is operably connected with the payload.

106. The constant force assembly of claim 105, wherein the other end of the guiding rail is operably connected with the payload via a support platform to which the payload is detachably connected such that the support platform and payload are permitted to move steadily in the vertical direction.

107. The constant force assembly of claim 105, wherein two parallel guiding rails are applied to support a support platform to which the payload is detachably connected such that the support platform and payload is permitted to move steadily in the vertical direction.

108. The constant force assembly of claim 90, wherein the payload is a gimbal having at least one axis of rotation.

109. A method of using a constant force assembly to stabilize a payload, said method comprising:

 permitting the constant force assembly to be detachably connected to a handle assembly of a stabilizing device using a first interface of the constant force assembly, wherein the handle assembly comprises one or more grips;

 permitting the constant force assembly to be detachably connected to a payload stabilization assembly of the stabilizing device using a second interface of the constant force assembly, wherein the payload stabilization assembly is configured to support the payload and permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation; and

 providing a force, using the constant force assembly, that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero.

110. The method of claim 109, wherein the handle assembly comprises a top handle bar and the first interface comprises a constant force spring assembly mounted on the top handle

bar and exerting a substantially constant force over its entire range of extension to equipoise the gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload.

111. The method of claim 110, wherein the constant force spring comprises a tension spring comprised of a rolled metal strip and a spool, and an outer end of the rolled metal strip, which is used as the second interface, is connected to the payload stabilization assembly.

112. The method of claim 111, wherein the spool is driven by a motor to unroll the rolled metal strip in the vertical direction to an expected position.

113. The method of claim 111, wherein a spring rate of the tension spring is manually adjustable according to a weight of the payload.

114. The method of claim 111, wherein the outer end of the rolled metal strip is connected with a support platform to which the payload is detachably connected.

115. The method of claim 110, wherein the constant force spring comprises a volute spring and a spiral cam connected with each other, and one end of a drawing member, used as the second interface, is fixed to an output end of the spiral cam and another end of the drawing member is connected with the payload stabilization through winding around the spiral cam.

116. The method of claim 115, wherein the other end of the drawing member is connected with a support platform to which the payload is detachably connected.

117. The method of claim 115, wherein a formation of the spiral cam is based on a relationship between a resilient force and a rotation angle of the volute spring.

118. The method of claim 115, wherein a resilient force generated by the volute spring is adjustable by a manual adjustment knob via a worm and gear assembly.

119. The method of claim 115, wherein the spiral cam is driven by a motor such that the payload together with the payload stabilization assembly returns at an expected position in each stabilization.

120. The method of claim 117, wherein the constant force spring assembly comprises a tension spring and one end of the tension spring is mounted on the top handle bar as the first interface and another end of the tension spring is connected with a cam by a first drawing member and one end of a second drawing member is connected with a rotatable wire spool which is mounted on the top handle bar and movably connected with the cam, and another end of the second drawing member is connected with the payload stabilization assembly as the second interface.

121. The method of claim 109, wherein the handle assembly comprises a top handle bar connecting two grips and the payload stabilization assembly comprises a vertical moving linkage operably connected to the top handle bar for permitting the payload to move steadily in the vertical direction.

122. The method of claim 121, wherein the vertical moving linkage comprises at least two pairs of link bars, which are connected to a support platform and symmetrical about the support platform, and each pair of link bars comprises an upper link bar and a lower link bar, and wherein one end of the upper link bar is pivotally connected with one end of the lower link bar, and another end of the upper link bar is fixedly attached to the top handle bar, and another end of the lower link bar is fixedly attached to the support platform to which the payload is detachably connected.

123. The method of claim 122, wherein the vertical moving linkage comprises a third pair of link bars which are connected to the support platform and the top handle bar and angled with the other two pairs of link bars.

124. The method of claim 121, wherein the vertical moving linkage comprises at least one guiding rail and one end of the guiding rail is connected with the top handle bar and another end of the guiding rail is operably connected with the payload.

125. The method of claim 124, wherein the other end of the guiding rail is operably connected with the payload via a support platform to which the payload is detachably connected such that the support platform and payload are permitted to move steadily in the vertical direction.

126. The method of claim 124, wherein two parallel guiding rails are applied to support a support platform to which the payload is detachably connected such that the support platform and payload is permitted to move steadily in the vertical direction.

127. The method of claim 116, wherein the payload is a gimbal having at least one axis of rotation.

128. A stabilizing device for stabilizing a payload, the stabilizing device comprising:
a handle assembly comprising one or more grips;
a payload stabilization assembly configured to support the payload and permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation; and,

a constant force assembly operably connected to the handle assembly and configured to support the payload stabilization assembly, wherein the constant force assembly is configured to provide a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero,

wherein the constant force assembly comprises a parallelogram linkage which includes four pivots and a resilient member obliquely arranged within the parallelogram linkage, and one attachment point of the resilient member is displaced in a horizontal direction by a negative offset distance from a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of two of four pivots that are adjacent to the handle assembly.

129. The stabilizing device of claim 128, wherein a gravity center of the payload is within a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of two of four pivots that are adjacent to the payload stabilization assembly.

130. The stabilizing device of claim 128, wherein the negative offset distance is formed by connecting the one attachment point of the resilient member to a point that locates at an opposite side of the vertical plane with respect to the resilient member.

131. The stabilizing device of claim 130, wherein the negative offset distance is in a range of about -2 mm to 0 mm or -0.6 mm to -0.2 mm.

132. The stabilizing device of claim 131, wherein the negative offset distance is about -0.4 mm.

133. The stabilizing device of claim 130, wherein the resilient member is positioned proximately along a diagonal of the parallelogram linkage and each of four pivots is positioned at a different one of four corners of the parallelogram linkage.

134. The stabilizing device of claim 133, wherein the four pivots comprise a first pivot, a second pivot, a third pivot and a fourth pivot, and wherein the first pivot and the second pivot are configured to be proximal to the handle assembly and to be vertically aligned with one another at an initial state, and wherein the third pivot and the fourth pivot are configured to be proximal to the payload stabilization assembly and to be vertically aligned with one another at the initial state, and the second pivot is higher than the first pivot in the vertical direction and the fourth pivot is higher than the third pivot in the vertical direction.

135. The stabilizing device of claim 133, wherein the resilient member is a tension spring having a first end and a second end, and the first end is attached to a connecting rod connecting the first pivot and third pivot at a first attachment point proximal to the third pivot, and the second end is attached to a connector between the second pivot and first pivot in the vertical direction at a second attachment point.

136. The stabilizing device of claim 135, wherein the connector is moveably connected with an adjustment knob and the adjustment of the adjustment knob causes the connector to move up and down in the vertical direction, thereby changing height of the second attachment point in the vertical direction relative to the first pivot.

137. The stabilizing device of claim 135, wherein the second attachment point is offset in a vertical direction by a distance from a horizontal plane passing through longitudinal axes of the first pivot and the third pivot.

138. The stabilizing device of claim 135, wherein the first attachment point is offset in a horizontal direction by a distance from a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of the first pivot and the second pivot.

139. The stabilizing device of claim 135, wherein a vertical distance between the second attachment point and the center of the first pivot is variable such that the constant force assembly provides different forces for different payloads having different gravity forces.

140. The stabilizing device of claim 135, wherein the force provided by the parallelogram linkage is determined according to one or more parameters of the tension spring, structural parameters of the parallelogram and positions of the first and second attachment points.

141. The stabilizing device of claim 140, wherein the one or more parameters of the tension spring comprise at least one of a mean coil diameter, a wire diameter, and the number of coils.

142. The stabilizing device of claim 135, wherein the parallelogram linkage is configured to have a natural frequency low enough to reduce or eliminate low-frequency jitter in the vertical direction.

143. The stabilizing device of claim 135, wherein the handle assembly is attached to the parallelogram linkage by a hinged mechanism.

144. The stabilizing device of claim 135, wherein the handle assembly is attached to the parallelogram linkage by a locking mechanism.

145. The stabilizing device of claim 128, wherein the payload stabilization assembly is coupled to the payload by a threaded connection.

146. The stabilizing device of claim 128, wherein the payload and the handle assembly are connectable with one another as a hand-held imaging device in the absence of the payload stabilization assembly and the constant force assembly.

147. The stabilizing device of claim 128, wherein the handle assembly has a variable orientation with respect to a direction of the force provided by the constant force assembly.

148. A method for stabilizing a payload, the method comprising:
supporting the payload using a payload stabilization assembly configured to permit the payload to rotate about at least one axis of rotation;
providing a force that equipoises a gravity force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in a vertical direction such that a net force of the payload stabilization assembly with the payload in the vertical direction is substantially zero, using a constant force assembly (1) configured to support the payload stabilization assembly, and (2) operably connected to a handle assembly comprising one or more grips,

wherein the constant force assembly comprises a parallelogram linkage which includes four pivots and a resilient member obliquely arranged within the parallelogram linkage, and one attachment point of the resilient member is displaced in a horizontal direction by a

negative offset distance from a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of two of four pivots that are adjacent to the handle assembly.

149. The method of claim 148, wherein a gravity center of the payload is within a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of two of four pivots that are adjacent to the payload stabilization assembly.

150. The method of claim 148, wherein the negative offset distance is formed by connecting the one attachment point of the resilient member to a point that locates at an opposite side of the vertical plane with respect to the resilient member.

151. The method of claim 150, wherein the negative offset distance is in a range of about -2 mm to 0 mm or -0.6 mm to -0.2 mm.

152. The method of claim 151, wherein the negative offset distance is about -0.4 mm.

153. The method of claim 150, wherein the resilient member is positioned proximately along a diagonal of the parallelogram linkage and each of four pivots is positioned at a different one of four corners of the parallelogram linkage.

154. The method of claim 153, wherein the four pivots comprise a first pivot, a second pivot, a third pivot and a fourth pivot, and wherein the first pivot and the second pivot are configured to be proximal to the handle assembly and to be vertically aligned with one another at an initial state, and wherein the third pivot and the fourth pivot are configured to be proximal to the payload stabilization assembly and to be vertically aligned with one another at the initial state, and the second pivot is higher than the first pivot in the vertical direction and the fourth pivot is higher than the third pivot in the vertical direction.

155. The method of claim 153, wherein the resilient member is a tension spring having a first end and a second end, and the first end is attached to a connecting rod connecting the first pivot and third pivot at a first attachment point proximal to the third pivot, and the second end is attached to a connector between the second pivot and first pivot in the vertical direction at a second attachment point.

156. The method of claim 155, wherein the connector is moveably connected with an adjustment knob and the adjustment of the adjustment knob causes the connector to move up and down in the vertical direction, thereby changing height of the second attachment point in the vertical direction relative to the first pivot.

157. The method of claim 155, wherein the second attachment point is offset in a vertical direction by a distance from a horizontal plane passing through longitudinal axes of the first pivot and the third pivot.

158. The method of claim 155, wherein the first attachment point is offset in a horizontal direction by a distance from a vertical plane passing through longitudinal axes of the first pivot and the second pivot.

159. The method of claim 155, wherein a vertical distance between the second attachment point and the center of the first pivot is variable such that the constant force assembly provides different forces for different payloads having different gravity forces.

160. The method of claim 155, wherein the force provided by the parallelogram linkage is determined according to one or more parameters of the tension spring, structural parameters of the parallelogram and positions of the first and second attachment points.

161. The method of claim 160, wherein the one or more parameters of the tension spring comprise at least one of a mean coil diameter, a wire diameter, and the number of coils.

162. The method of claim 155, wherein the parallelogram linkage is configured to have a natural frequency low enough to reduce or eliminate low-frequency jitter in the vertical direction.

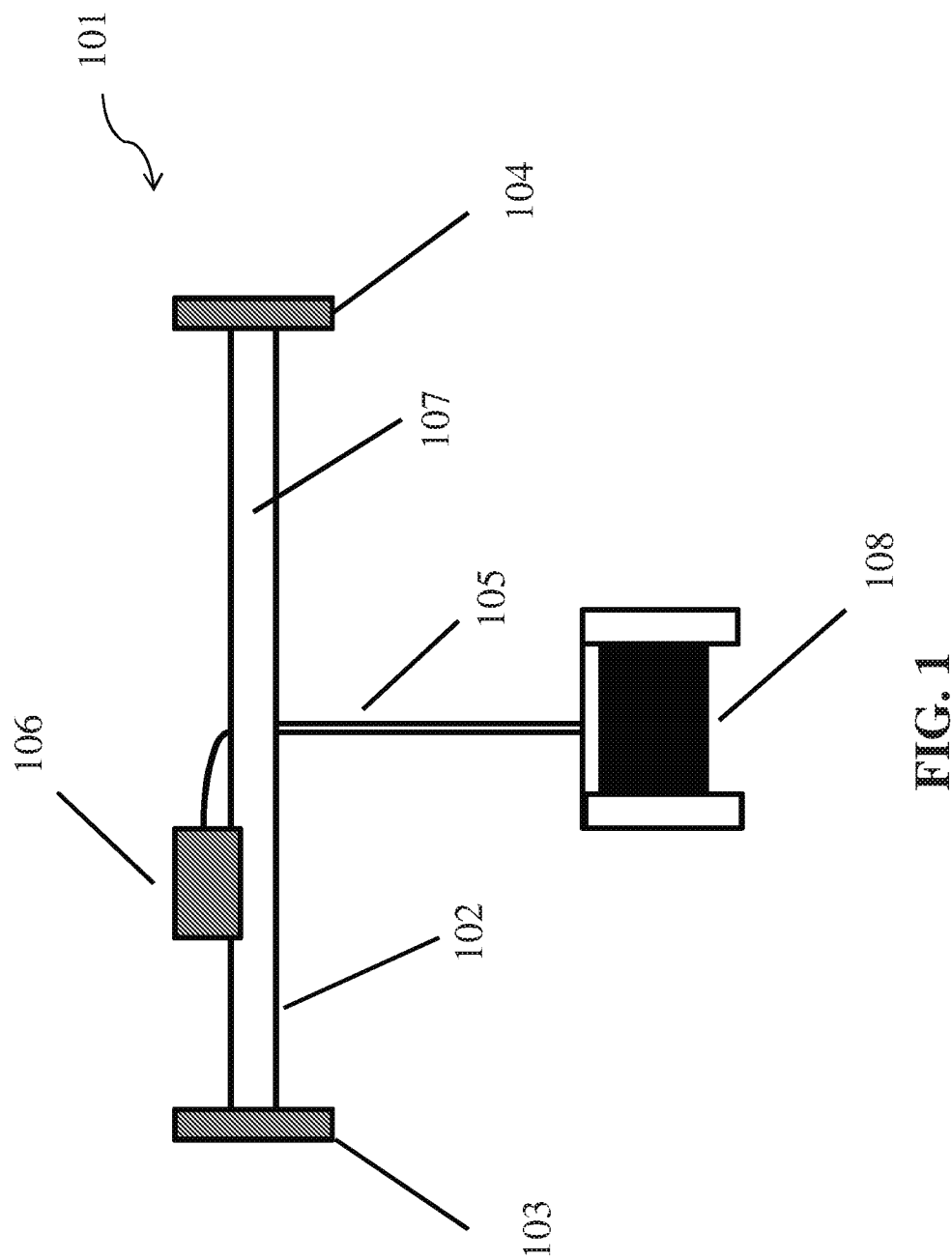
163. The method of claim 155, wherein the handle assembly is attached to the parallelogram linkage by a hinged mechanism.

164. The method of claim 155, wherein the handle assembly is attached to the parallelogram linkage by a locking mechanism.

165. The method of claim 148, wherein the payload stabilization assembly is coupled to the payload by a threaded connection.

166. The method of claim 148, wherein the payload and the handle assembly are connectable with one another as a hand-held imaging device in the absence of the payload stabilization assembly and the constant force assembly.

167. The method of claim 148, wherein the handle assembly has a variable orientation with respect to a direction of the force provided by the constant force assembly.



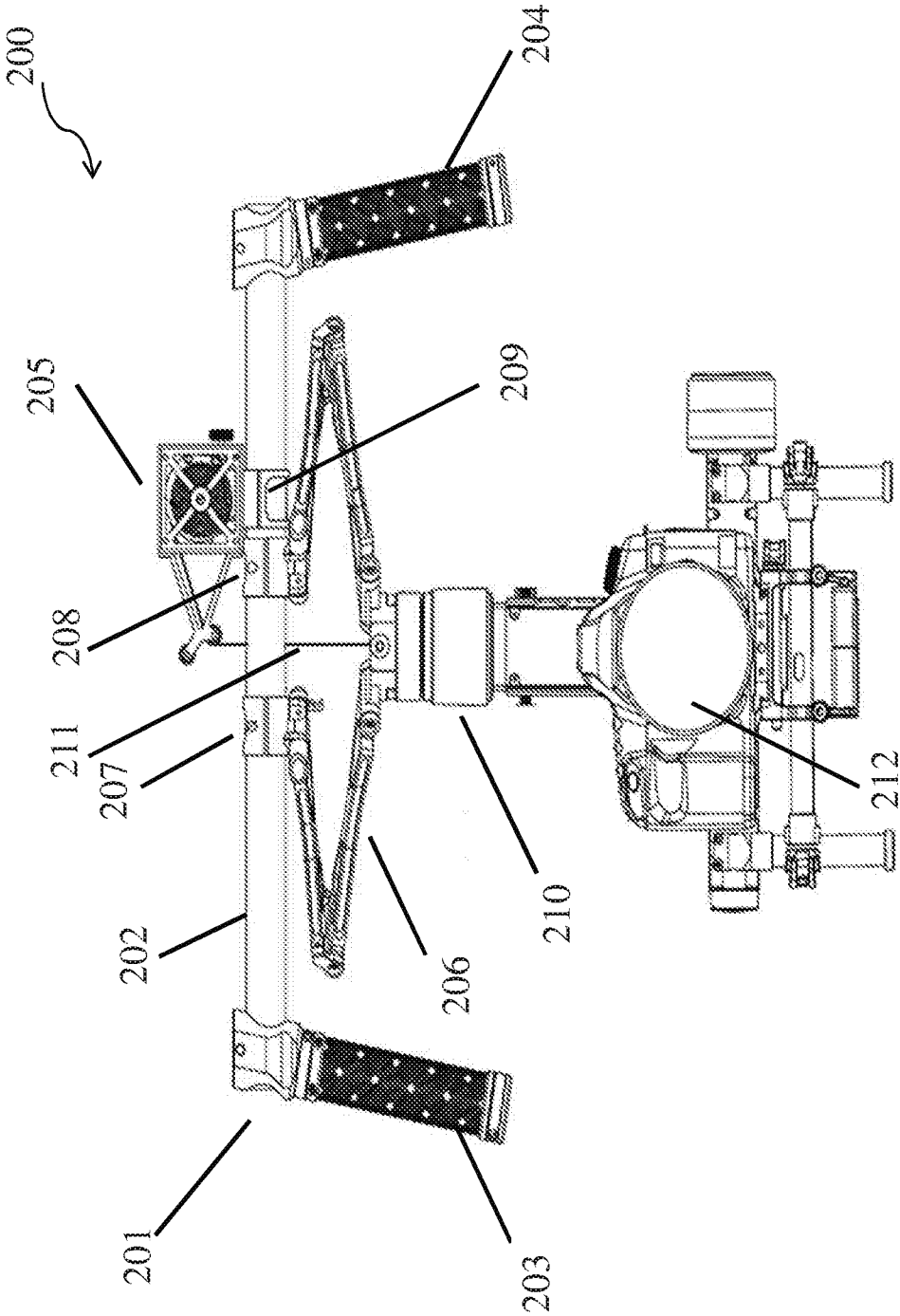


FIG. 2

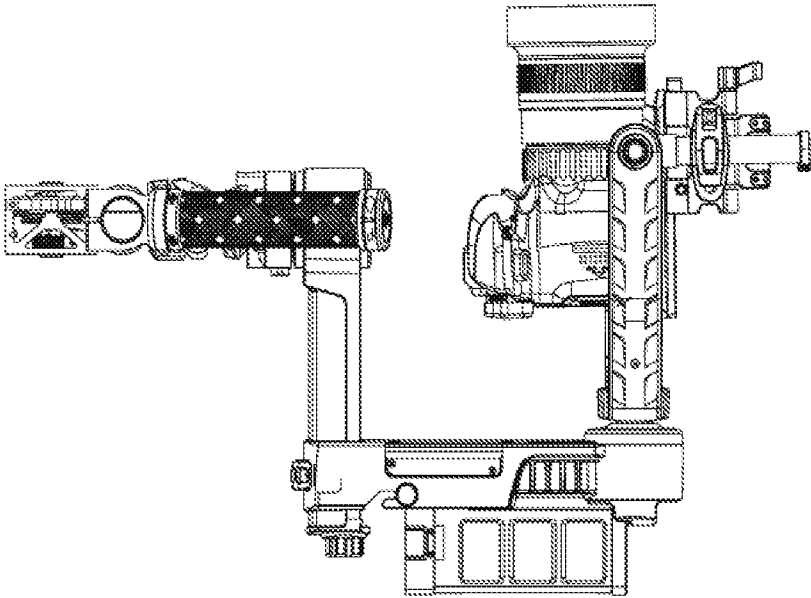


FIG. 4

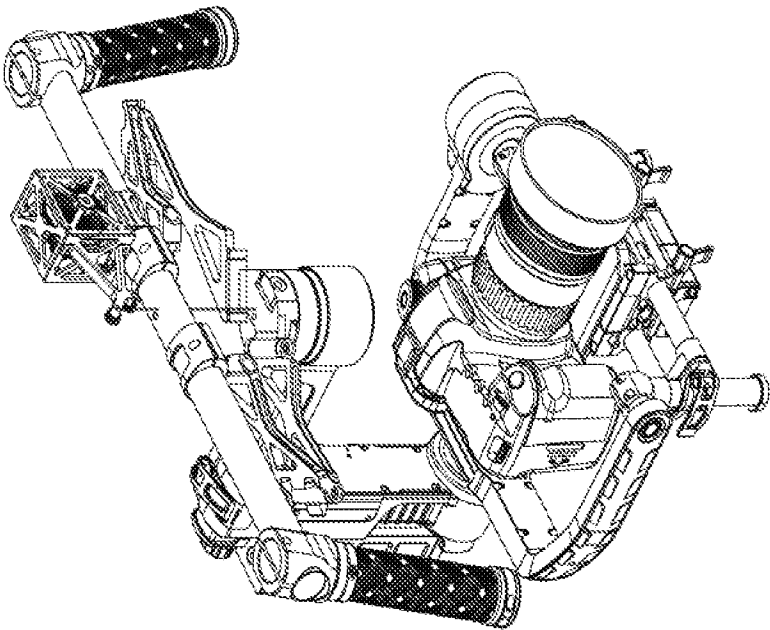


FIG. 3

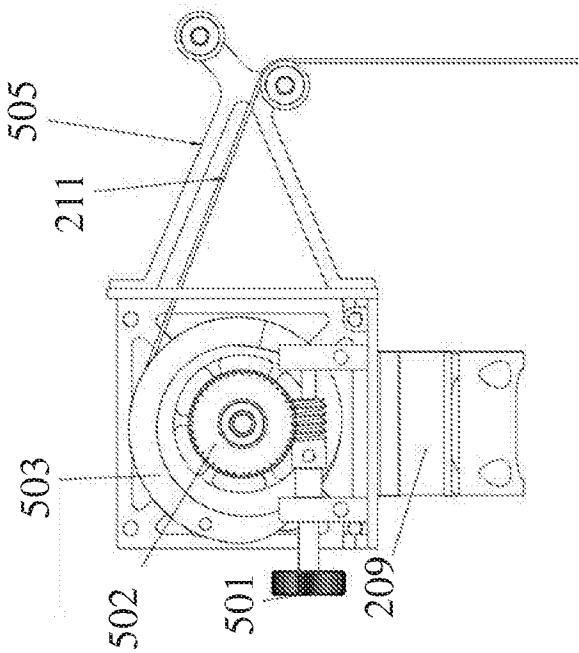


FIG. 6

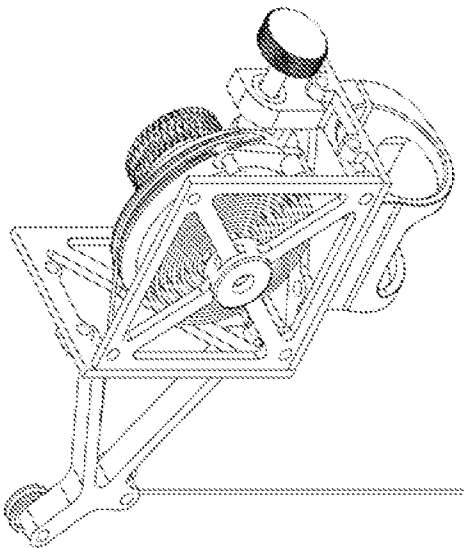


FIG. 7

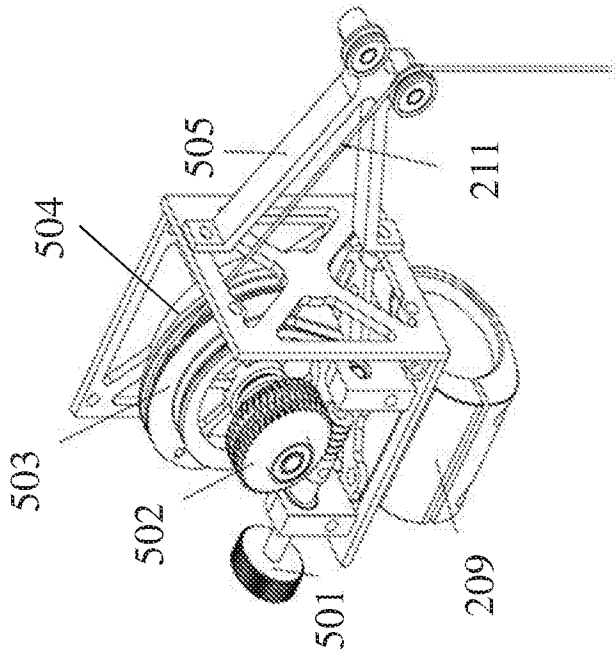


FIG. 5

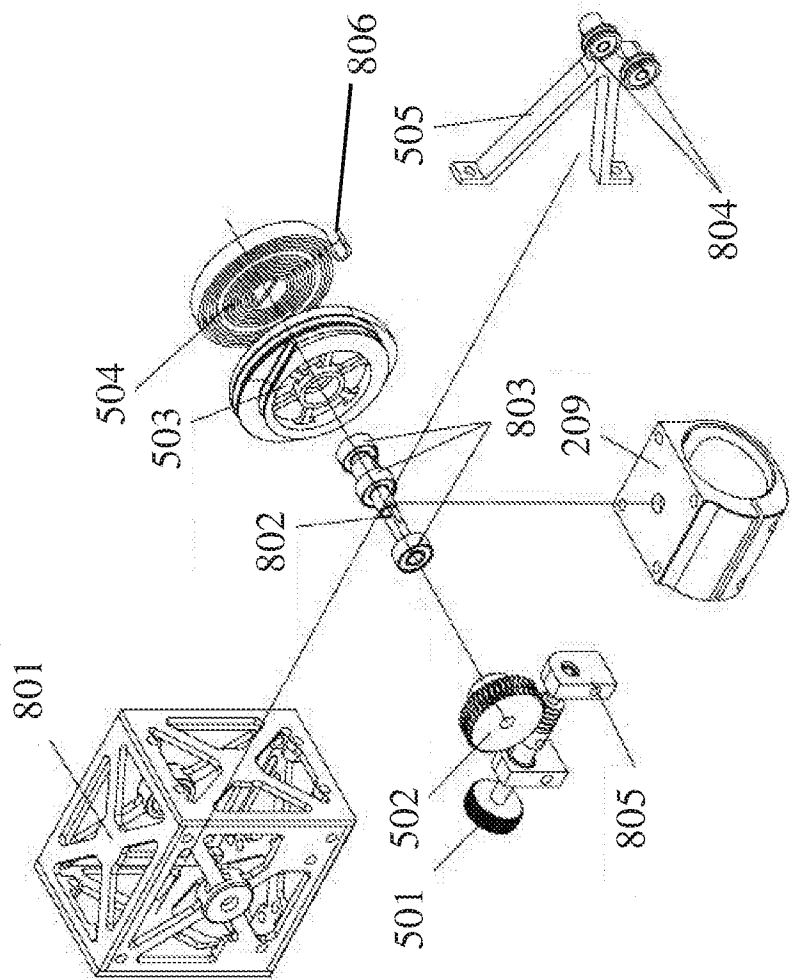


FIG. 8

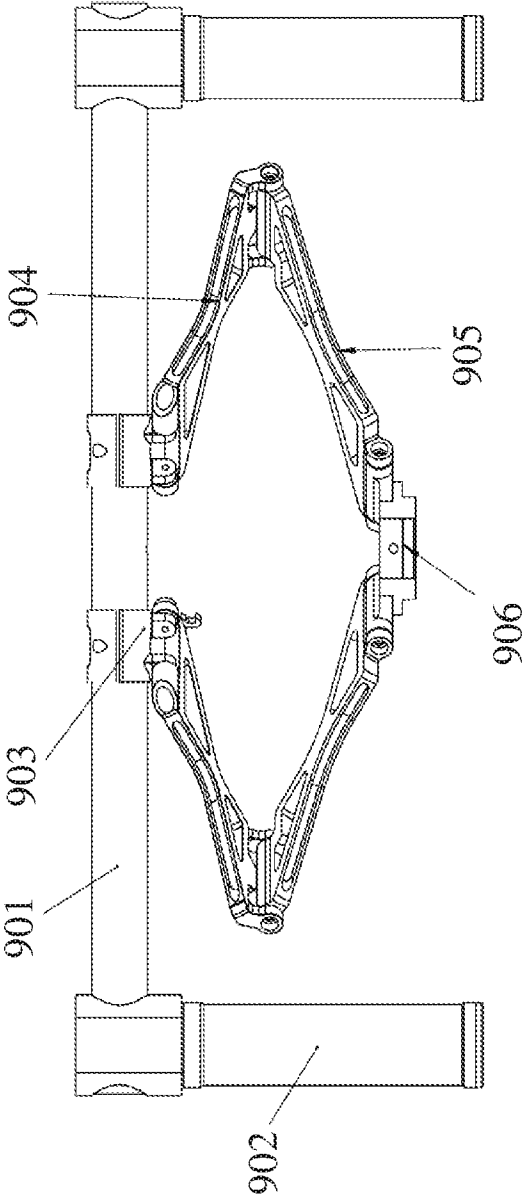


FIG. 9

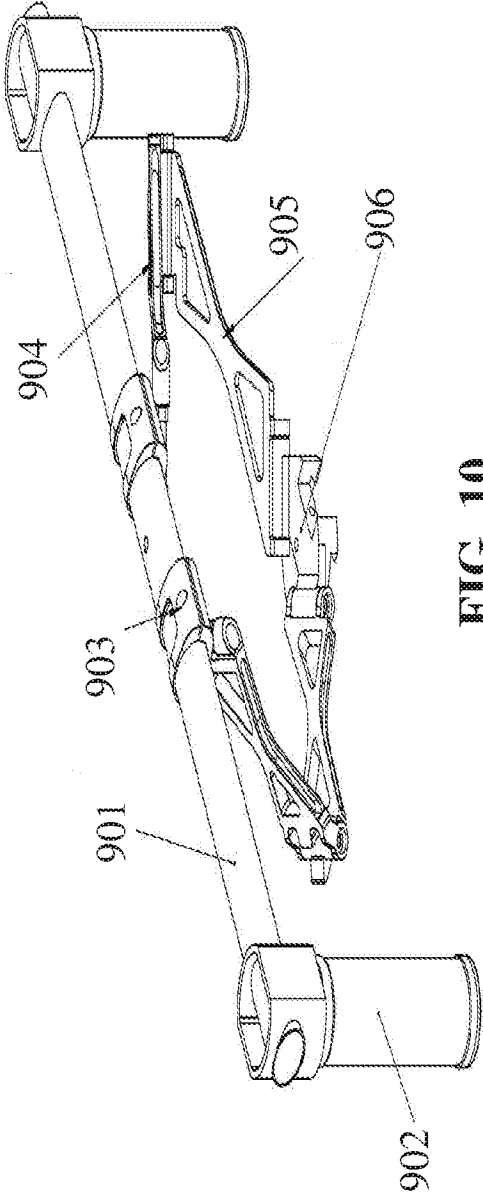


FIG. 10

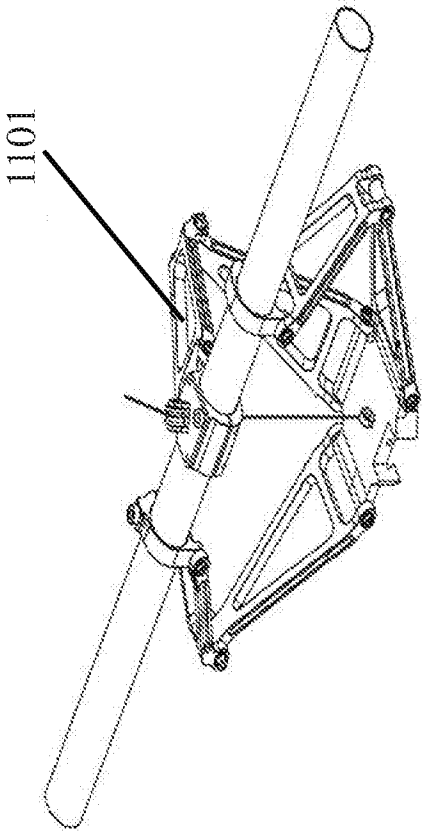


FIG. 11

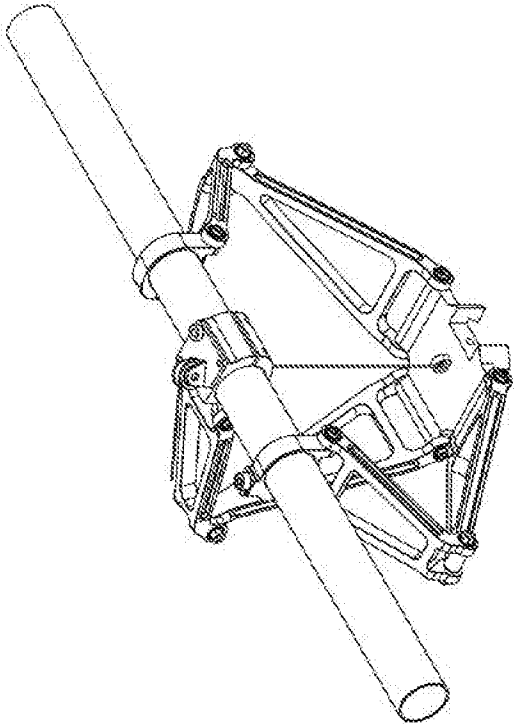


FIG. 12

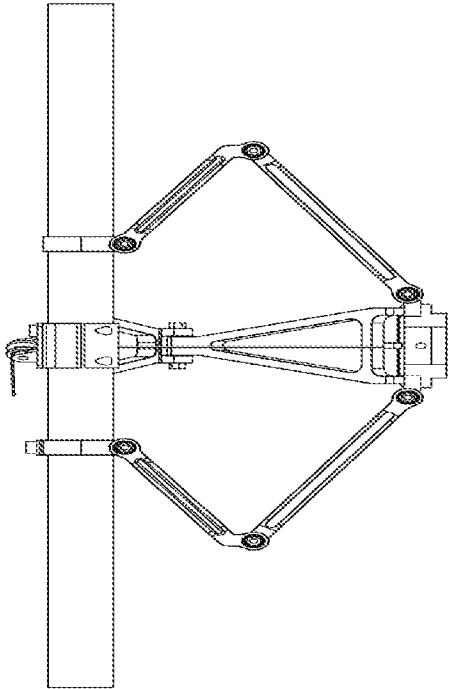


FIG. 13

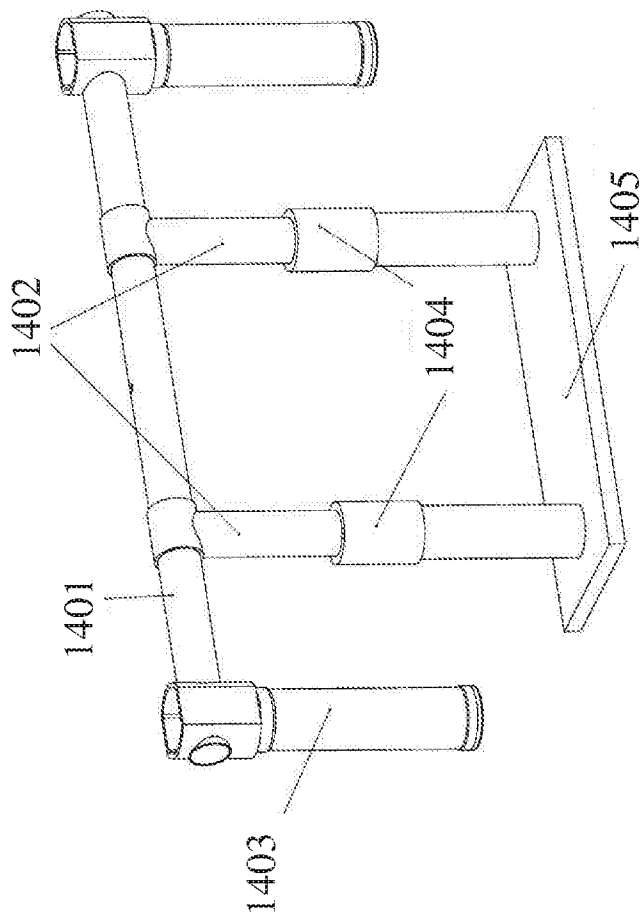


FIG. 14

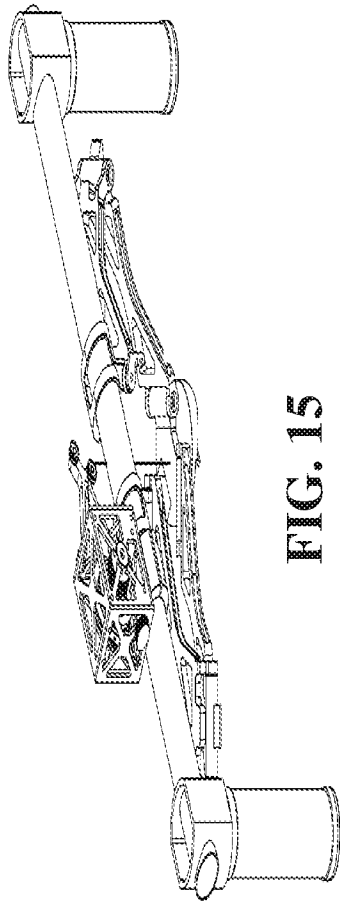


FIG. 15

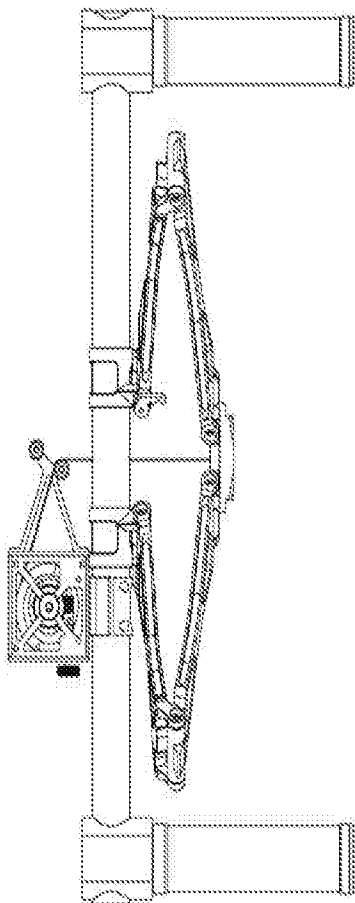


FIG. 16

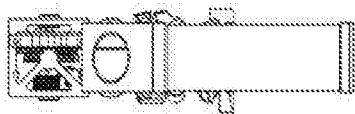


FIG. 17



FIG. 18

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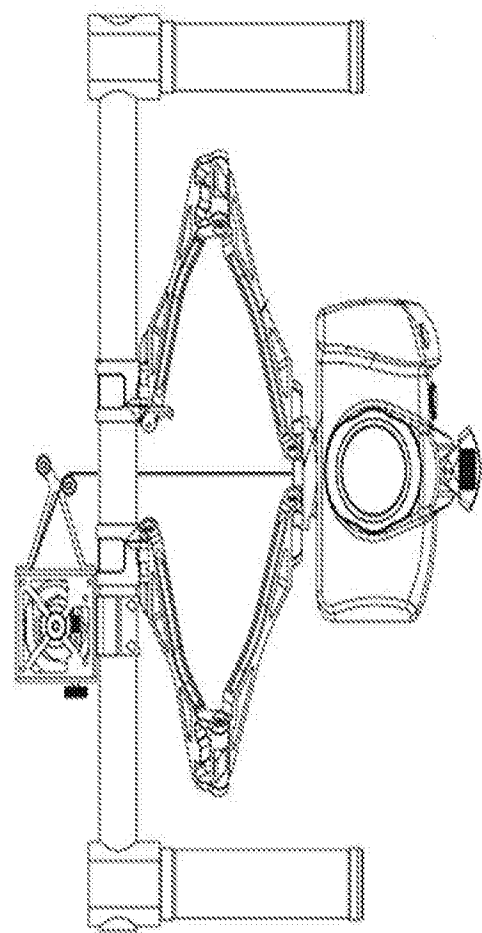


FIG. 19

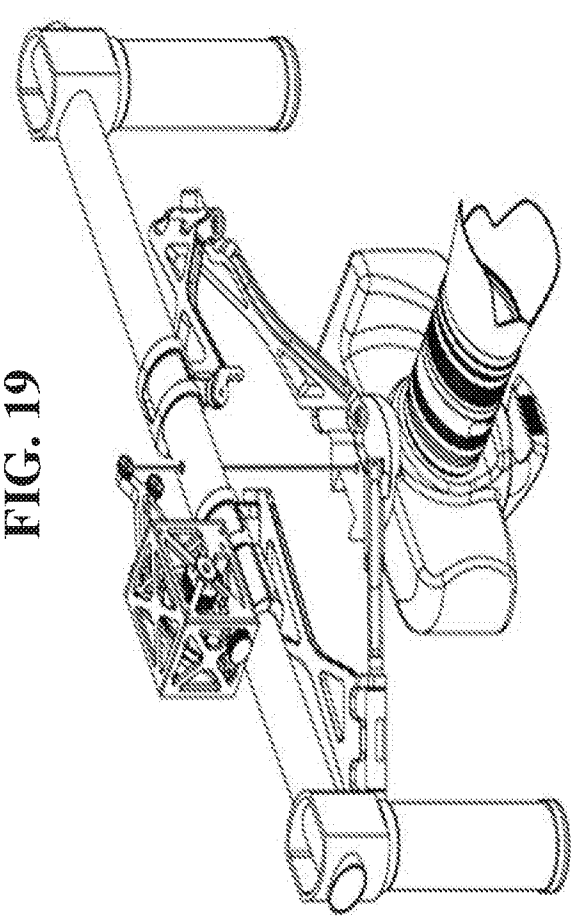
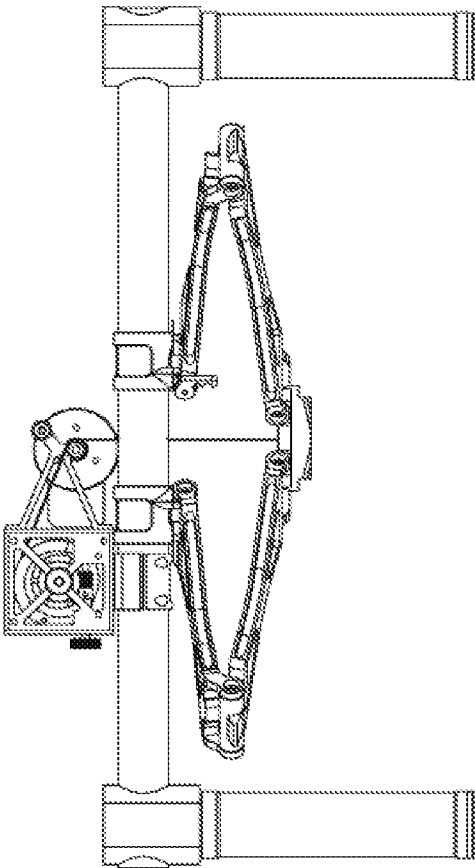
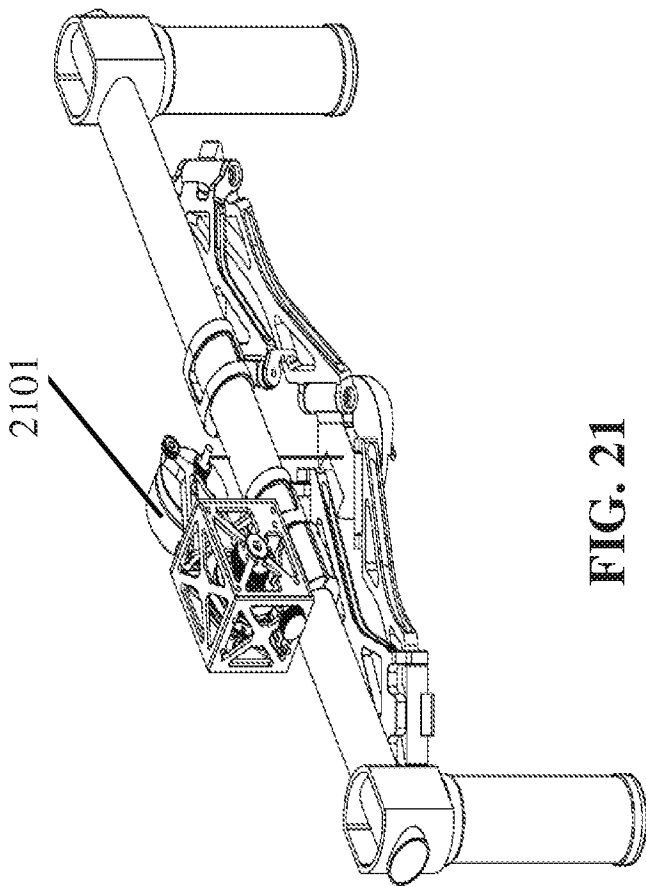


FIG. 20



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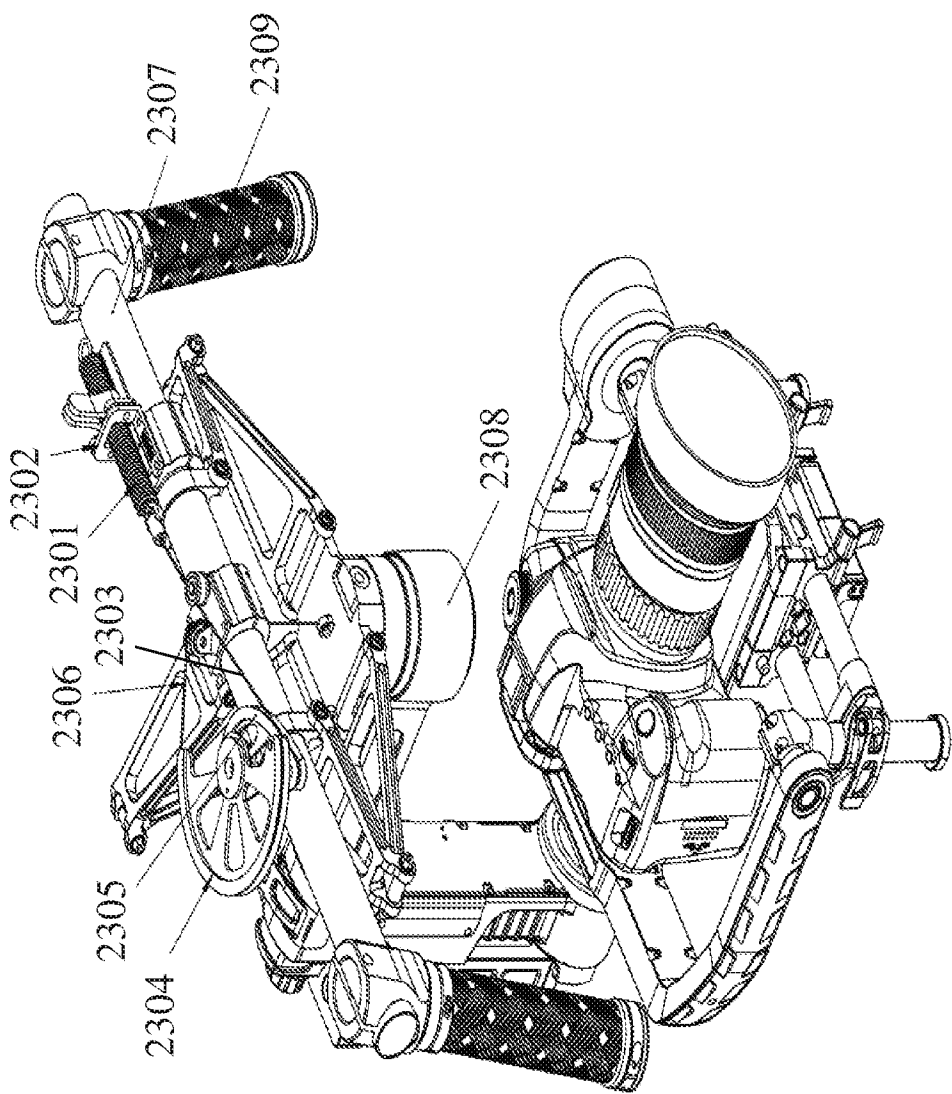


FIG. 23

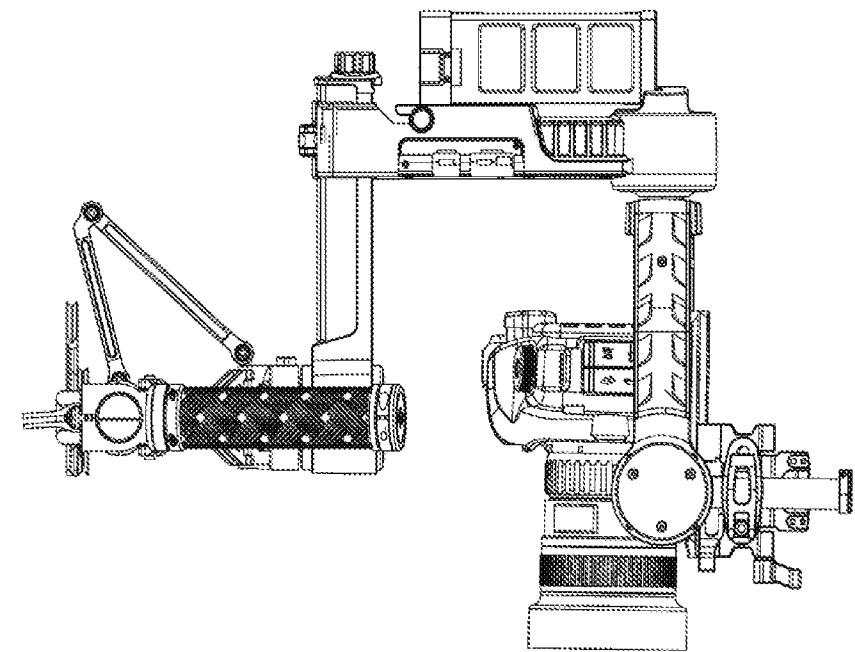


FIG. 25

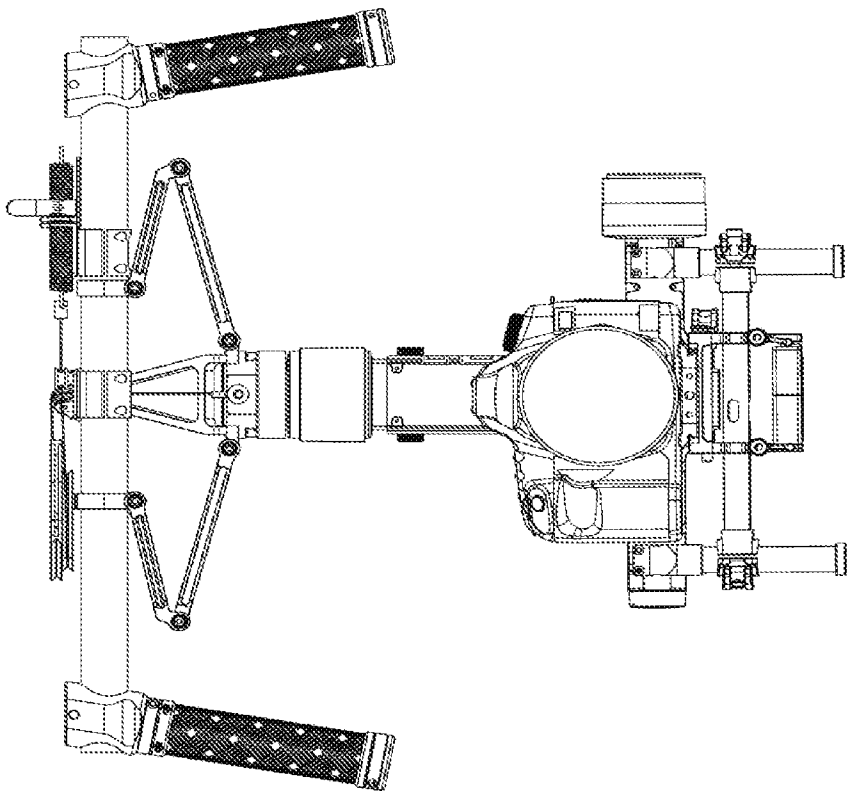


FIG. 24

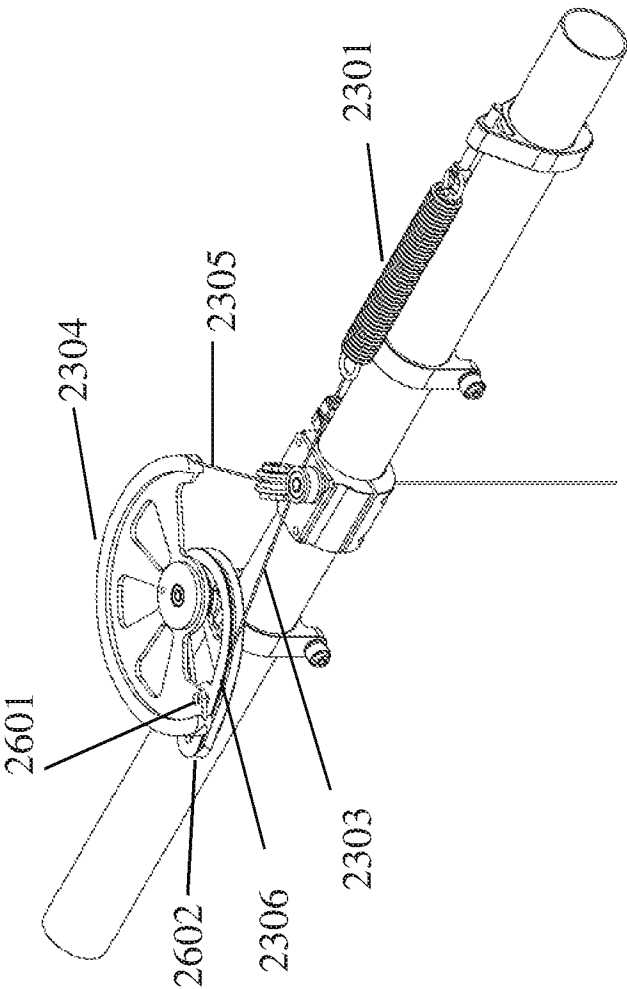


FIG. 26

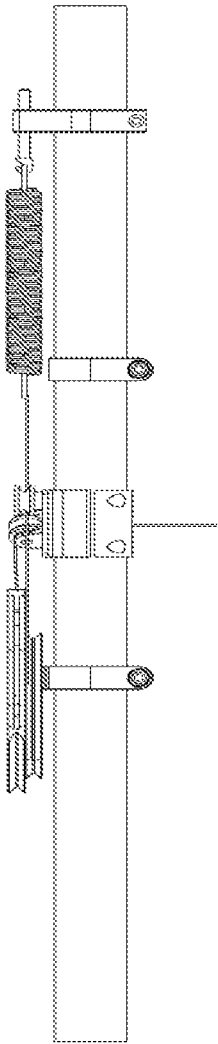


FIG. 27

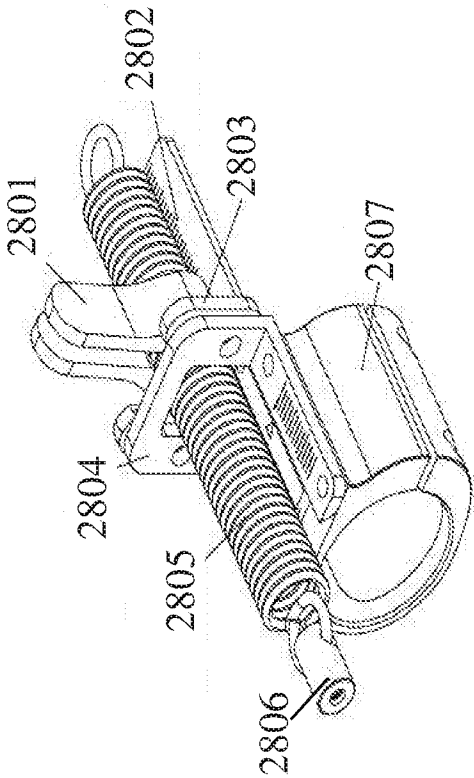


FIG. 28

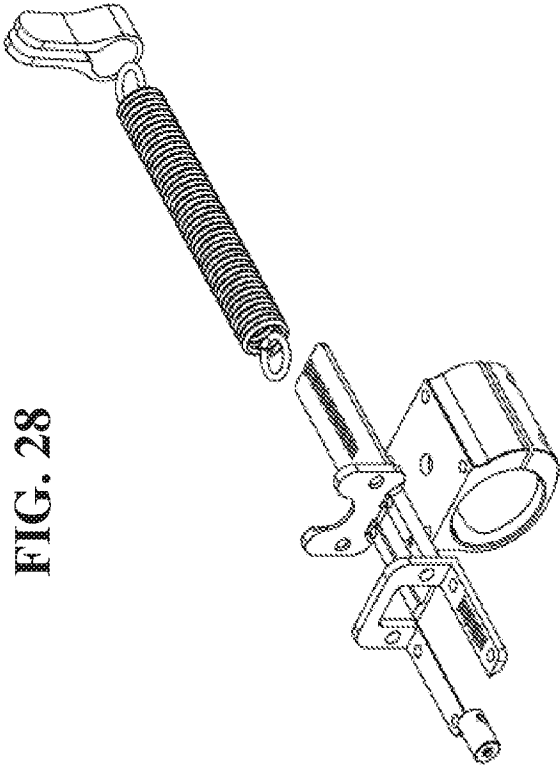


FIG. 29

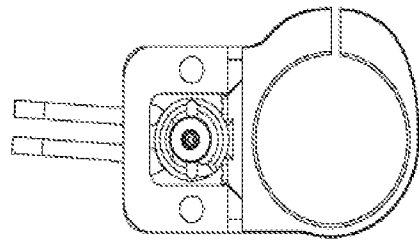


FIG. 32

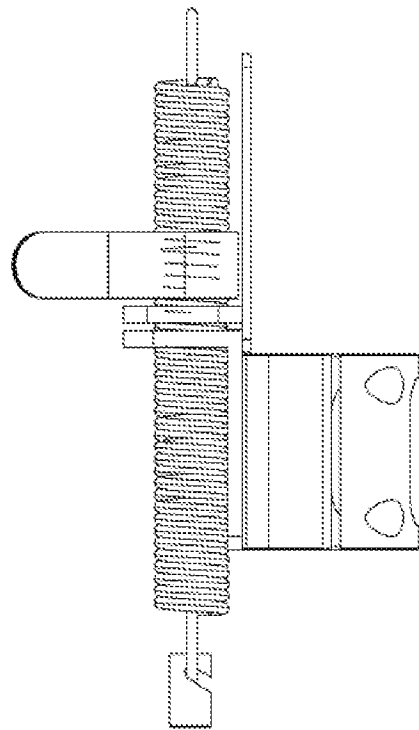


FIG. 30

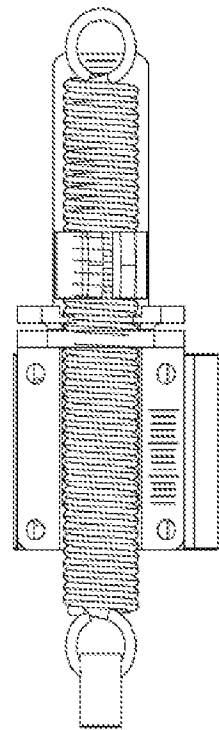


FIG. 31

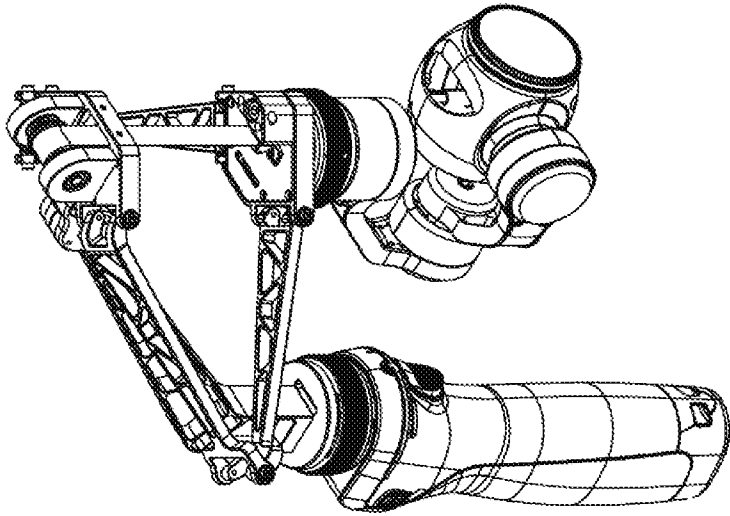


FIG. 34

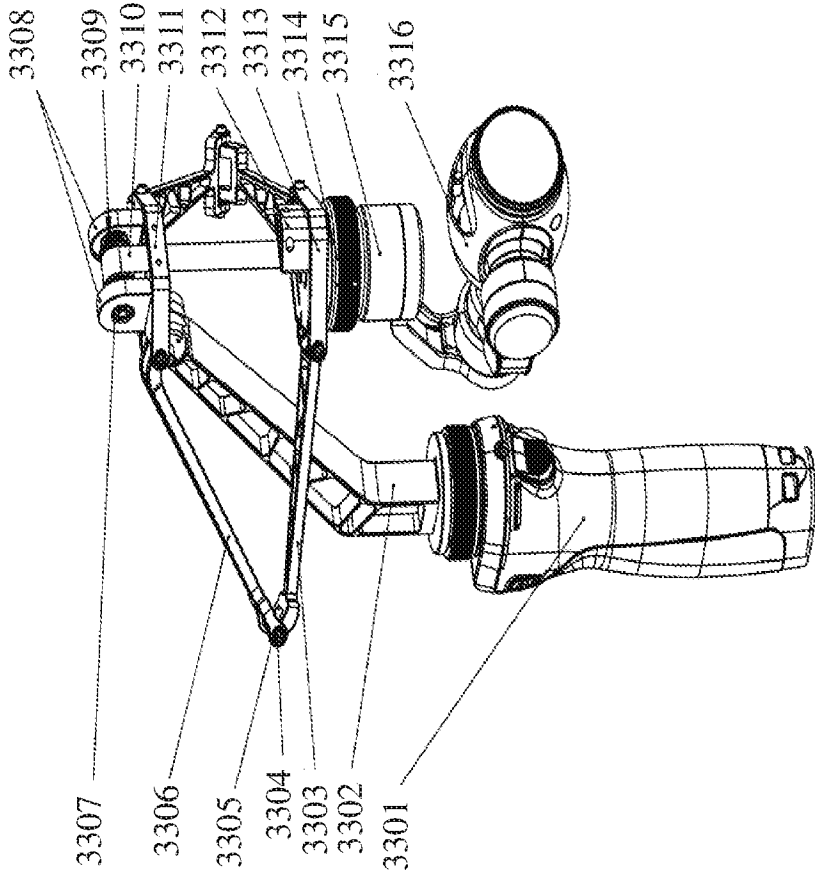


FIG. 33

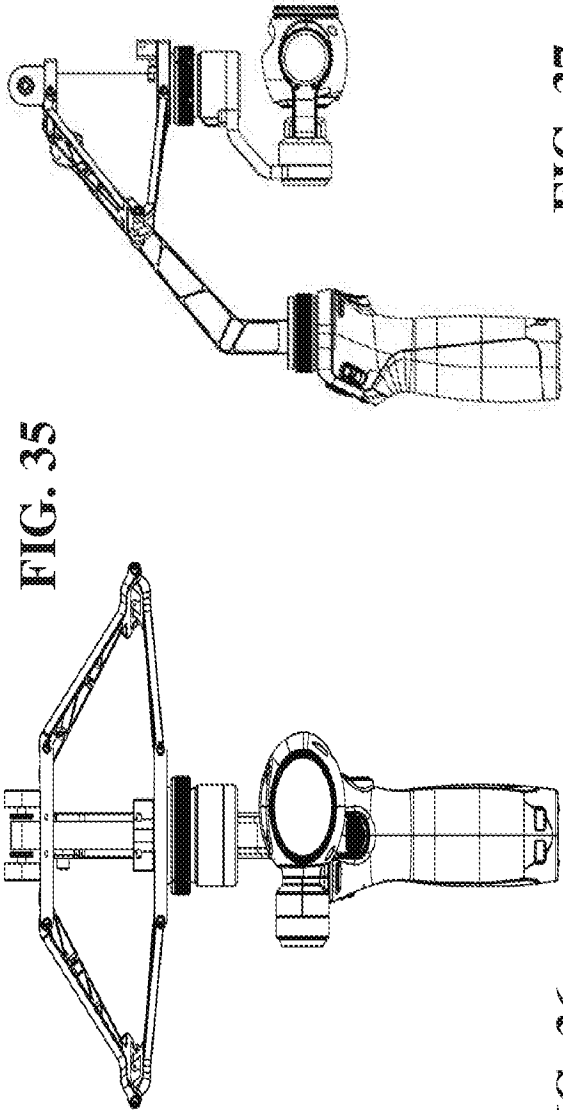
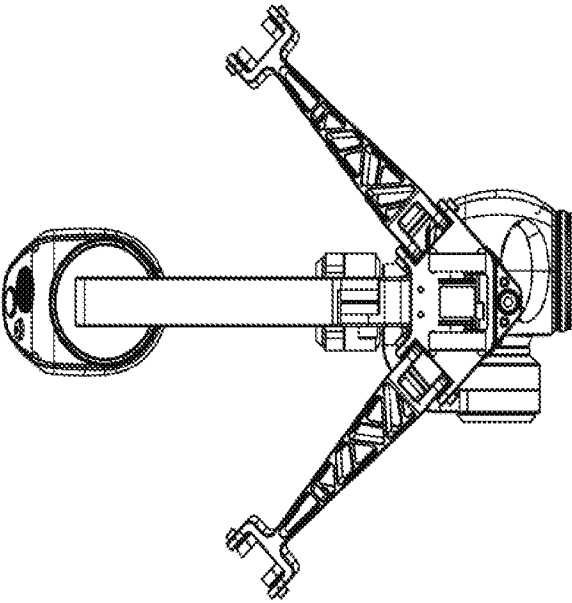


FIG. 35

FIG. 37

FIG. 36

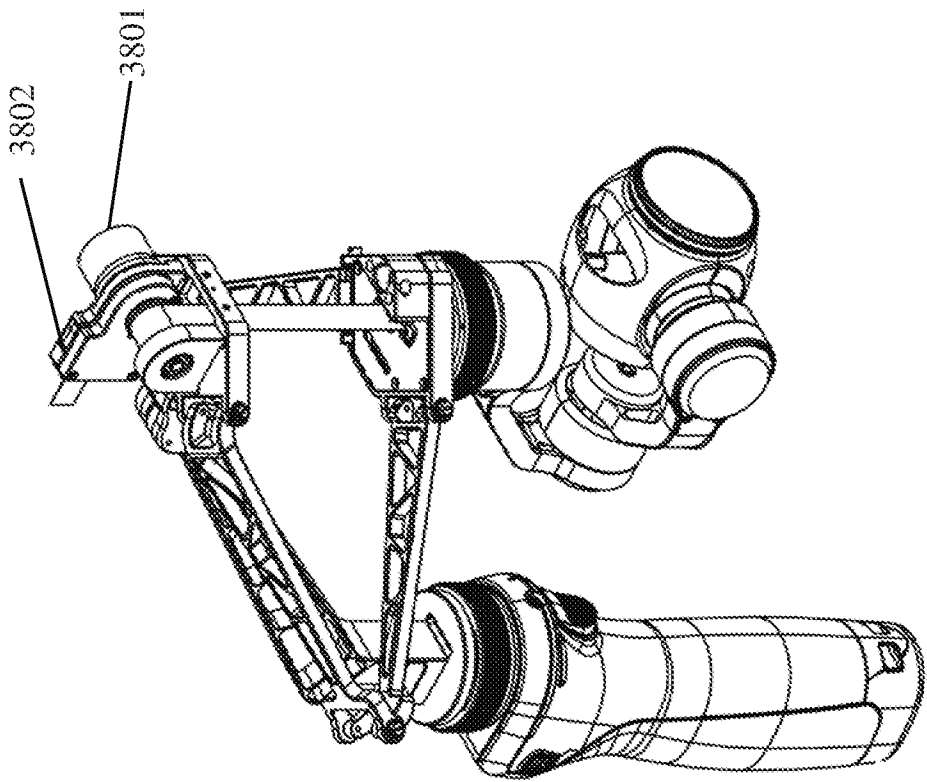


FIG. 38

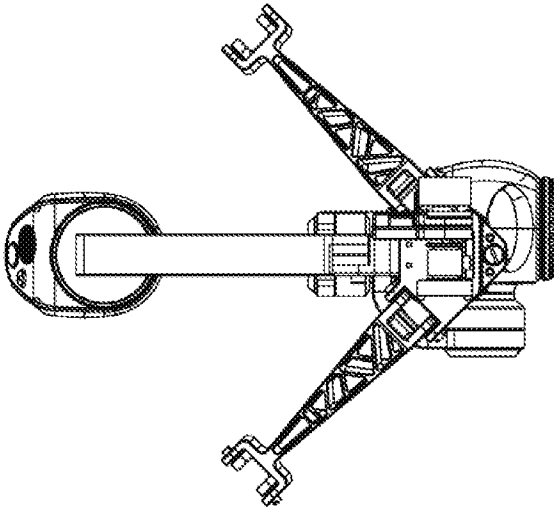


FIG. 39

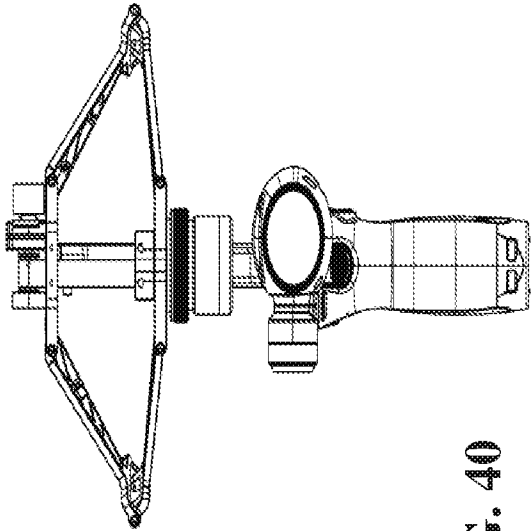


FIG. 40

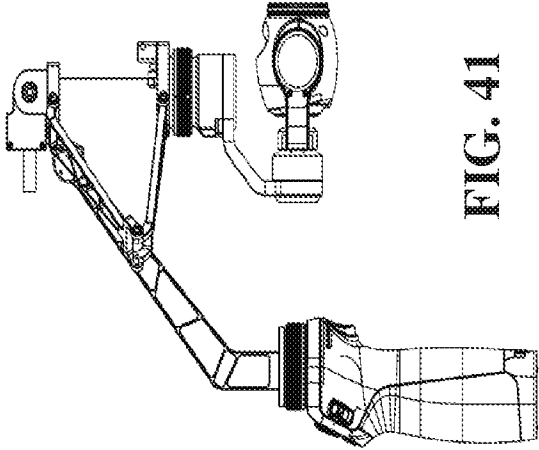


FIG. 41

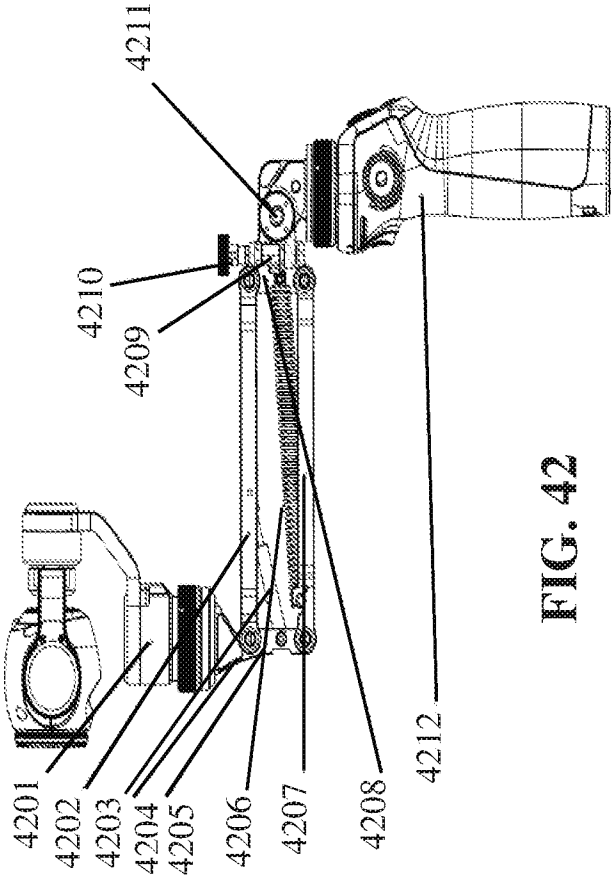


FIG. 42

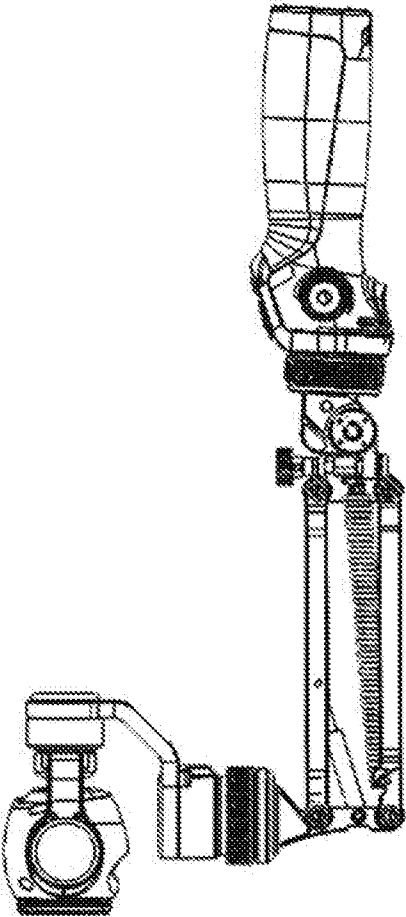


FIG. 43

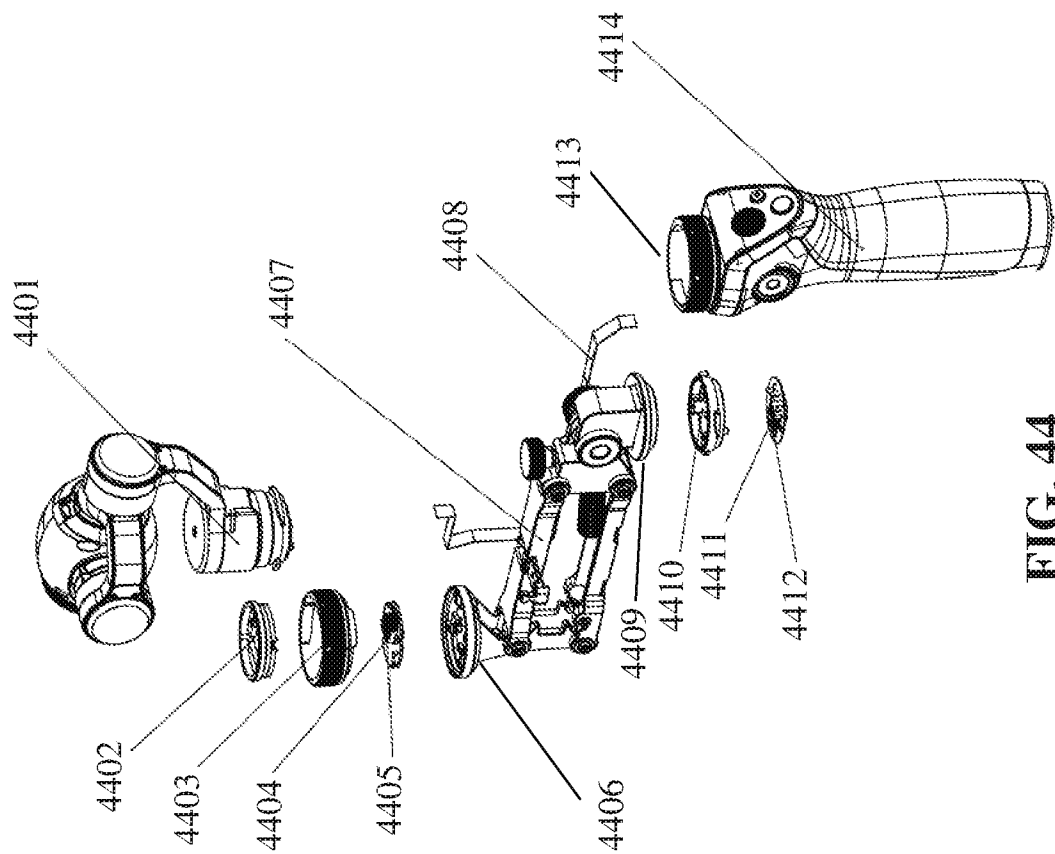


FIG. 44

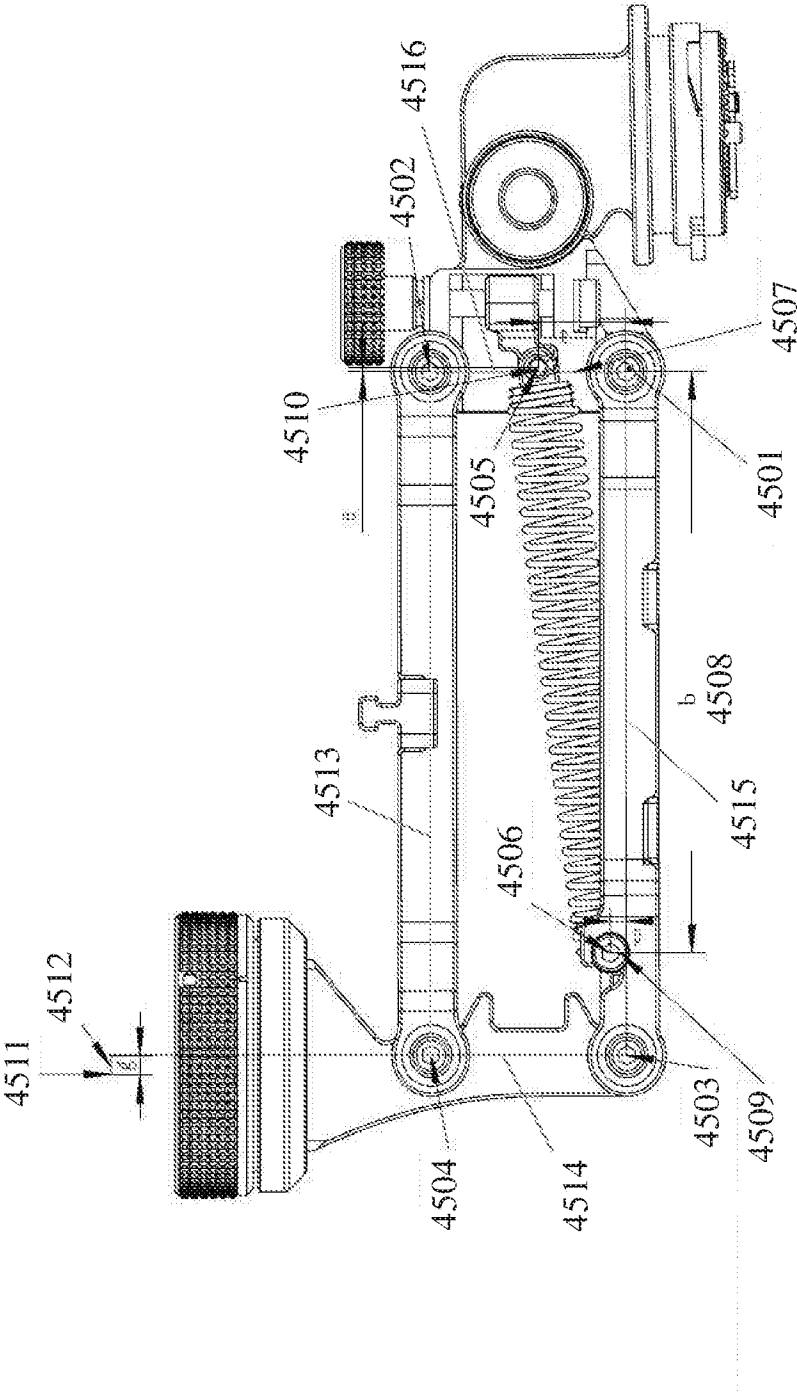


FIG. 45

FIG. 46

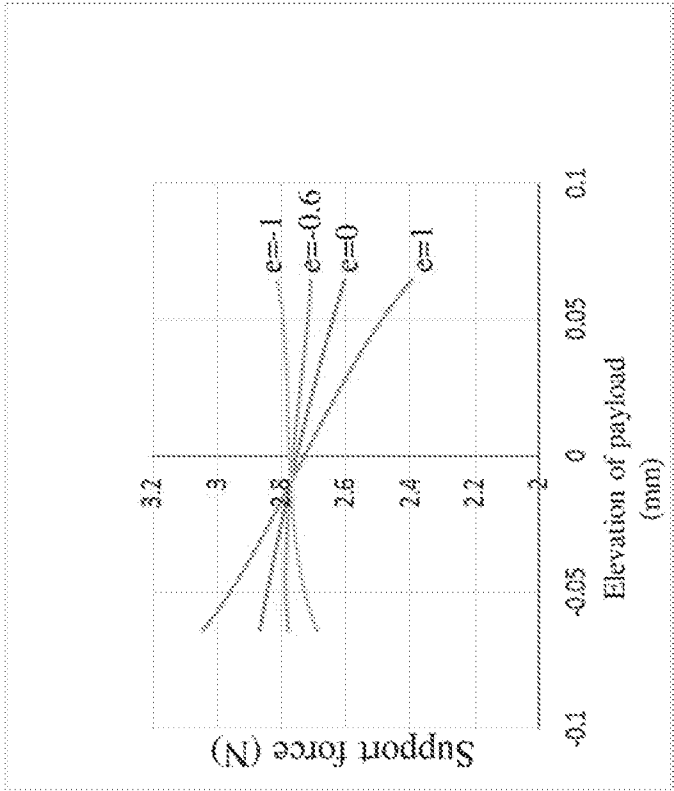
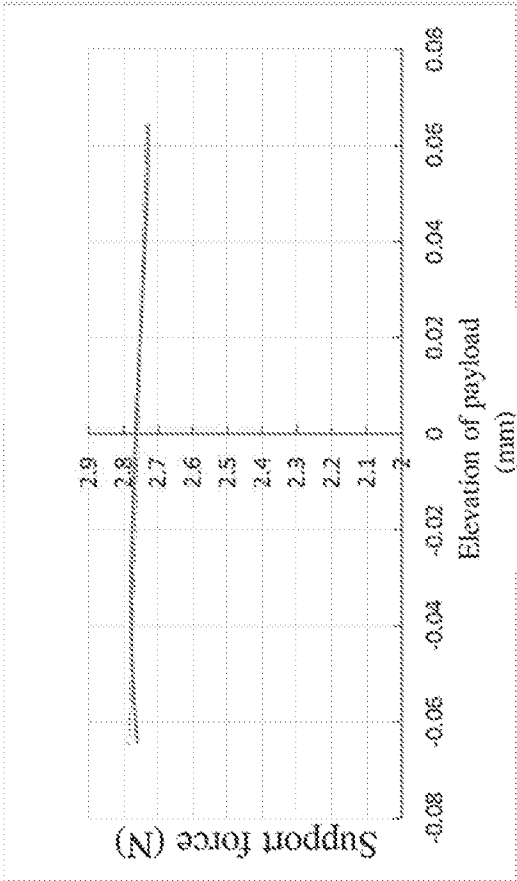
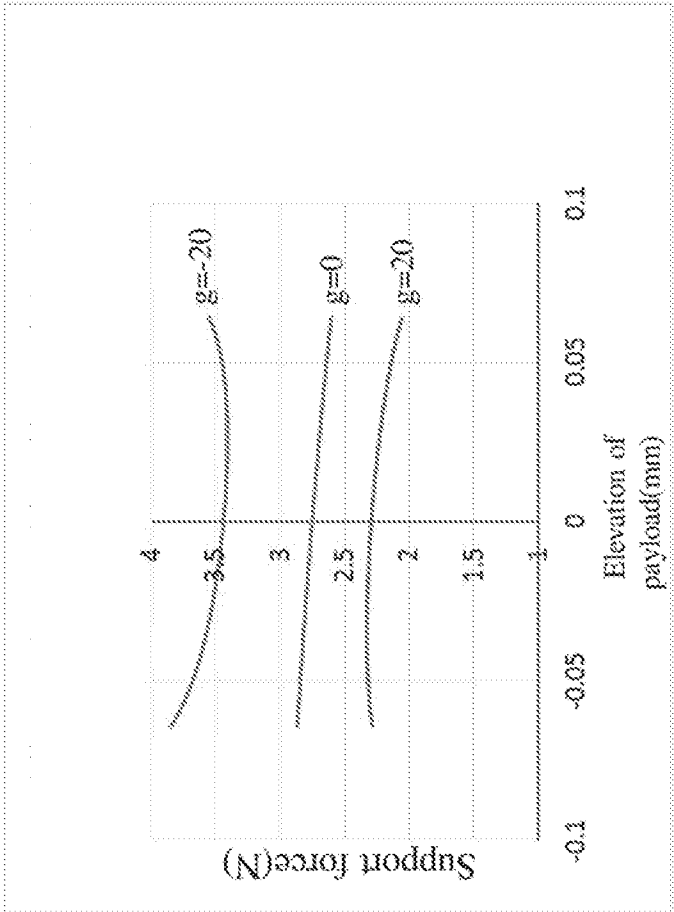


FIG. 48



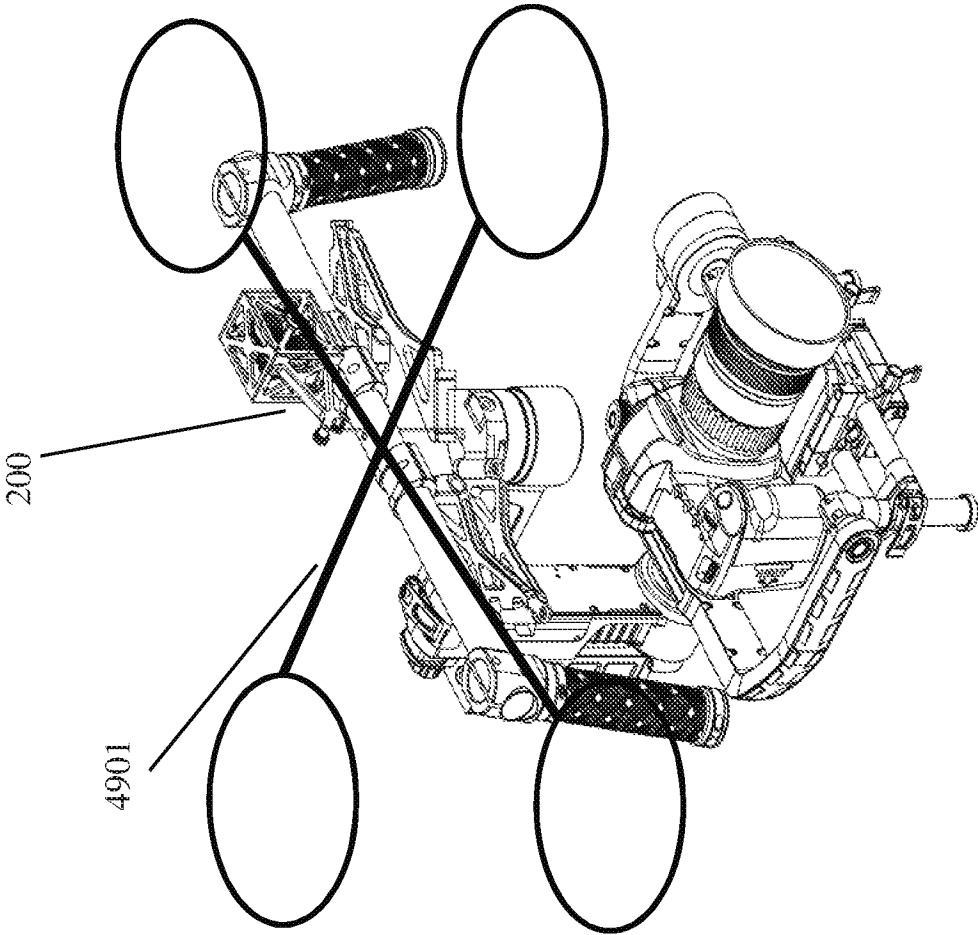


FIG. 49

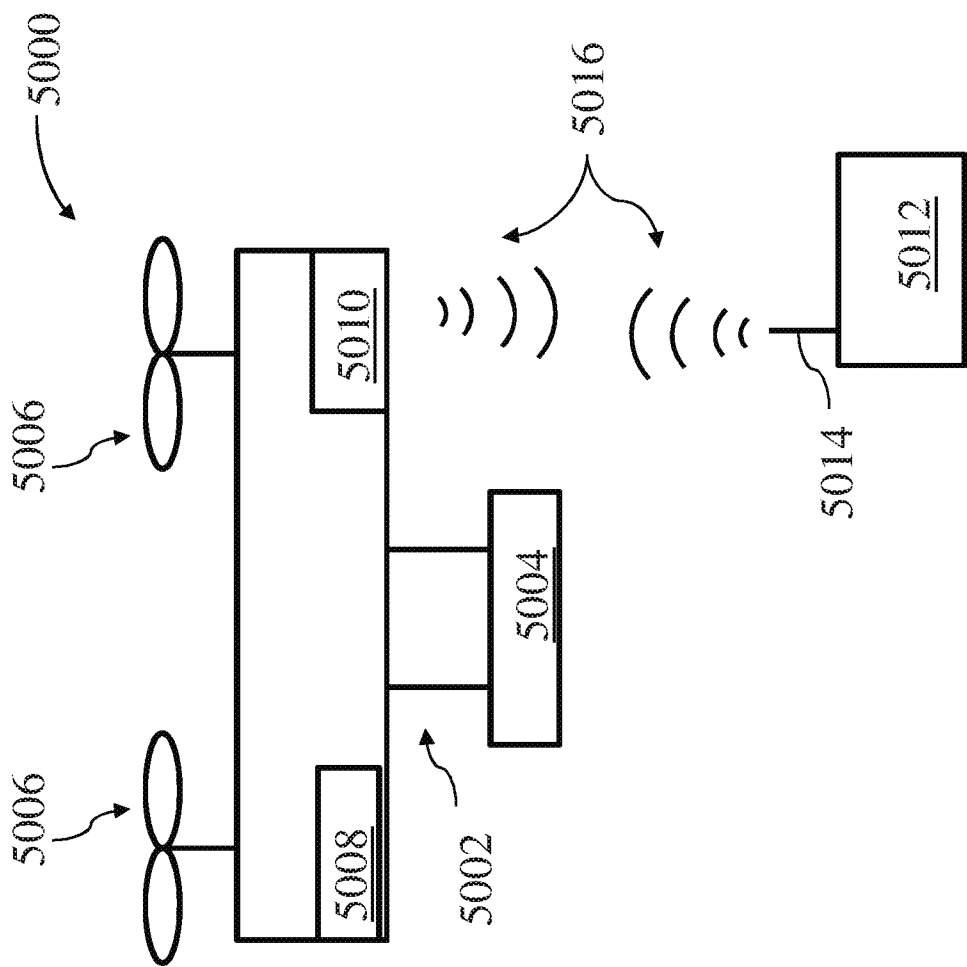


FIG. 50

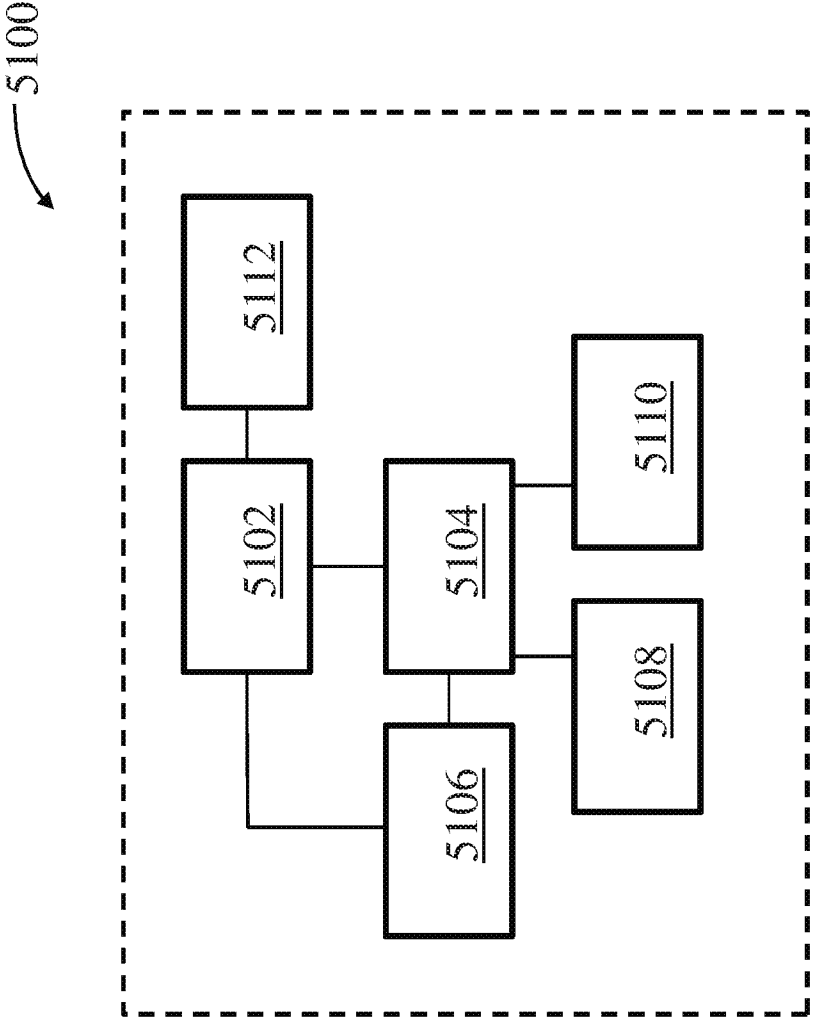


FIG. 51

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/CN2016/073111

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

F16M 13/04(2006.01)i

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

F16M13/04, F16M13/00, F16M11/00, F16M11/18, F16M11/02, F16M11/06, F16M11/04

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

WPI,EPODOC,CNKI,CNPAT:stable, handle, grip, support, rotate, axis, load, weight, balance, plane, aircraft, gravity, unmanned, dji, aerial, zero, vertical, net force, spring, counter, tripod, holder

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	CN 105144695 A (FREEFLY SYSTEMS INC.) 09 December 2015 (2015-12-09) description, paragraphs [60]-[74], figures 1-3	1-167
A	CN 201218391 Y (LI, JINGGUO) 08 April 2009 (2009-04-08) the whole document	1-167
A	US 2010079101 A1 (SIDMAN, ADAM D.) 01 April 2010 (2010-04-01) the whole document	1-167
A	US 5609316 A (TIGLIEV, GEORGE S.) 11 March 1997 (1997-03-11) the whole document	1-167
A	US 2014099092 A1 (THE ALBA GROUP LTD.) 10 April 2014 (2014-04-10) the whole document	1-167
A	US 2010238345 A1 (CAMERA MOTION RESEARCH L.L.C.) 23 September 2010 (2010-09-23) the whole document	1-167



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

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“Y” document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

“&” document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

01 October 2016

Date of mailing of the international search report

26 October 2016

Name and mailing address of the ISA/CN

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Telephone No. (86-10)62413206

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
Information on patent family members

International application No.

PCT/CN2016/073111

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				AU	2014230009	A1	22 October 2015
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				WO	2014140354	A1	18 September 2014
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