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Space for the Future – Space in the European Union

(Berlin, 17 October 2011)

Dear Chairman, Honourable Members of Parliament, Director General, Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to convey to you the greetings of Antonio Tajani, Vice President of the European Commission and EU Commissioner in charge of Space policy. Unfortunately he cannot be here, because he has to attend an important meeting in Italy this morning.

Secondly, I would like to congratulate you for having chosen this week for your Annual Conference - as it will be a historic week for EU space policy. 75 hours from now the first operational satellites of the Galileo system will be launched in Kourou, and this event will be followed closely not only there and in Brussels, but also in Germany, in Italy, in Russia and all over the globe.

Thirdly, I would like to give you a brief update on the European Union Space policy.

As you are all aware, the space sector still is a relatively small sector in Europe, if compared with other industries. Today, the turnover of Europe's space manufacturing industry is around 6 bn. Euro, associated with some 35,000 highly skilled jobs. And yet there can be no doubt as to the political and economic importance of the space sector for Europe.

Being a source of information and knowledge and an enabler for communications and navigation, space technologies are a strategic asset. The impact of space technologies on citizens is enormous and ranges from pushing back the limits of our understanding of the universe to the provision of concrete applications relevant to citizens in their everyday lives.

Space-based services have become so ubiquitous that people simply take them for granted and do not necessarily realise that they are made possible through the use of space technologies. In today's knowledge-based societies, the economy would simply cease to function without facilities such as the Internet, telecommunications, weather forecasts or satellite navigation.

Space-enabled applications represent a means to address many of today's societal challenges and contribute to the fulfilment of important European policies: environmental protection and the fight against climate change are two prominent examples, but there are many others in the areas of transport, agriculture or fisheries.

Space is also a key element of the EU2020 strategy and its flagship initiatives, in particular the Innovation Union and Industrial Policy. On April 4, the European Commission has adopted a Communication on the European space strategy, where it emphasizes that space-based activities and applications are vital for the EU's economic growth, innovation and competitiveness.

The priorities of Europe's space strategy presented in this Communication are to ensure the success of the EU's two flagship programs, Galileo and GMES. Our Galileo global satellite navigation system will ensure that the Union is able to remain independent in a strategically important field, at a time when reliance on civilian global navigation systems continues to grow. The EU's Earth monitoring system GMES delivers information on the state of the sea, land and atmosphere, and helps to make our planet a safer place by addressing issues such as climate change adaptation and crisis prevention and management.

Both programmes form an integral part of the Europe 2020 strategy, as they will give rise to innovative downstream services, new business opportunities and job creation across various sectors of the European economy. For instance, the satellite navigation applications markets are growing rapidly, and their annual turnover worldwide is expected to reach around € 240 billion by 2020. Moreover, as a result of the advantages of Galileo and EGNOS compared with the other competing systems, they are expected to generate economic and social benefits worth around € 60 - 90 billion over the next 20 years.

Naturally, once in place, these European critical space infrastructures would need to be secured, hence the need for Europe to implement a 'space situational awareness' system.

In its Communication "A Budget for Europe 2020", the Commission decided to make a distinction between Galileo, for which the EU is the sole owner, and other projects. While Galileo funding will be ensured in the Regulation laying down the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, an alternative arrangement is proposed for GMES, whose funding is foreseen outside the MFF after 2013, enabling the EU to meet its international commitments.

Besides these space programmes the European Commission has the intention to define an industrial policy for space, in close coordination with ESA and Member States. The targets of this space industrial policy are: a steady and balanced development of the industrial base as a whole (including SMEs), greater competitiveness on the world stage, non-dependence for strategic sub-sectors and development of the market for space products and services.

Furthermore, support to research and innovation is needed to ensure the competitiveness of the European space industry. International cooperation will be highly important, as normally space endeavours go beyond the possibilities of one single state. In this respect, the Union

will continue the "space dialogues" with its strategic partners, in close collaboration with ESA.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

European Space policy is driven by three main imperatives:

- **societal** (the benefits for citizens well being that can be derived from space exploration and use),
- **economic** (space generates knowledge and is a driver for innovation)
- and **strategic** (space contributes to the European Union's projection as a global actor).

Almost two years ago, the new EU treaty entered into force and brought two major changes relevant for space policy: Article 4 of the Treaty, which refers to the areas of research, technological development and space, where the Union shall have competence to carry out activities, in particular to define and implement programmes, and more specific, the new Article 189, which lays out this shared competence to the Union in space policy with the specific aim of promoting scientific and technical progress, industrial competitiveness and the implementation of its policies.

As already mentioned, Galileo/EGNOS and GMES are well established programmes whose completion and continuation beyond 2013 will be the subject of proposals before the end of this year. (I underline that the Commission is working on proposals for both, Galileo and GMES!) The Commission remains committed to complete the Galileo constellation and put in place a new governance scheme, as well as GMES.

Following the adoption of the GMES 2011-2013 Regulation one year ago, the challenge will be to ensure its implementation in partnership with Member States and to prepare the new operational programme for 2014 and beyond.

The "S" in GMES must be reinforced. It will be necessary to determine how existing capacities (civil and military) can contribute to GMES, in particular for strategic surveillance of wide geographical areas and tactical surveillance of limited areas. It will be necessary to combine different space technologies and adequate resolutions and improve response times in order to better respond to security missions.

But space applications are also an essential tool for the security of the citizen. The Union's security needs may be covered by either national capacities used in a coordinated manner or by the development of common capacities. The Union must reinforce its partnership with Member States in order to ensure that security missions do not depend on third countries' assets and guarantee the continuity of missions undertaken by Member States themselves.

Space infrastructures are critical infrastructures, which contribute to citizens' security and well being. They must be protected against risks such as those posed by debris or solar radiation. Member States' existing protection capacities must be developed so as to establish a reliable European space situational awareness system. The Union should define the organisation and governance of such a system taking into account its dual nature and the need to ensure its sustainable exploitation.

The development of an SSA system involves the amalgamation of existing capacities, the acquisition of those currently missing as well as the operation and maintenance of the system. It is for the Union to define the organisation and governance of SSA that takes into account this dual nature and ensures the sustainable exploitation of the system. The organisation of the SSA system may be based on a structure that allows a variable participation of Member States and include entities adapted to their mission and constraints.

Furthermore, space is an important component of the Union's research and innovation policy. Support for space research will be defined in the "Horizon 2020" programme which is expected to be adopted by the European Commission on 30 November, together with the proposals on Galileo and GMES.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The EU space policy is facing big challenges in the months ahead. Vice President Tajani would be grateful, if the European Parliament and the 27 national Parliaments of the European Union would join together to support his vision of a stronger European Space Sector. I hope that today's conference will bring a valuable contribution and I wish you best success for this conference!