

# Cabinet Newsletter

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Dear Reader,

## Space

In last week's presentation on the future involvement of the European Union in Space, Vice President Tajani signalled two key priorities: Galileo, a European global navigation satellite system, and Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES), an autonomous satellite capability. To these policy areas, the Vice President added the goals of protecting both the infrastructure and exploration of space, arguing that European spatial policy would not be complete without them and urging "The necessity of assuring their protection at the European level without depending on other powers".



Antonio Preto  
Head of Cabinet

Following the Lisbon Treaty's entry into force earlier this year, the EU has been granted a specific competence on space, making this an important time for the work of our Cabinet, which oversees this project. The devastating mud flood in Kolontár, Hungary was presented as an example of the importance of space technology and development.



Furthermore, Vice President Tajani highlighted the sizable benefits these space systems can generate, pointing to estimated gains of a million euros per year until 2022 were GMES to be renewed until then, and up to 5 million euros in 2027. He suggested that his fellow colleagues present relevant examples of the practical applications of Space to their respective domains, including atmospheric surveillance, security, and crisis-management, among others.

In conclusion, Vice President Tajani urged Commissioners to adopt next month's Communication on the future activities of the European Union in space, as well as their support for the extension and improvement of GMES' operational phase beyond 2014. He concluded that this initiative is contingent on the agreement of the European Parliament and Member States, whilst taking into account the financial crisis and the limitations this imposes, which nevertheless "should not impede us from investing in the future well-being of European citizens", as he noted.

### **Food Supply**

In other news, Vice President Tajani intervened on Thursday morning at the conference, "For a competitive food supply chain in Europe", where he pointed to three areas of importance in a competitive food sector: that is food security, product quality, and prices. As early signs of economic recovery must be encouraged by public policies, the Vice President highlighted the agro-food industry in the context of the Europe 2020 programme.



Vice President Tajani began his discussion with a mention of the 2008 launch of the High Level Group on Competitiveness of the Agro-Food Industry, whose initial recommendations took into account the Commission's monitoring of food products. This process gave way to the 2009 Communication: "A better functioning food-supply chain in Europe". The Commission subsequently launched the EU High Level Forum to drive food chain competitiveness, presided by Vice President Tajani with fellow Commissioners Barnier, Dalli and Ciolos. The outcomes of the Forum will derive from the following four themes: contractual relations in the food-supply chain (thereby tackling the argument of disparate market powers, which affects Small and Medium Enterprises and their consumers); agro-logistics; statistical instruments to monitor the entire agricultural supply-chain; and a competitive agro-food industry.

Finally, Vice President Tajani reaffirmed the importance of systems of trade preferences involving modified food products, which increase industrial competitiveness through tariff liberalisation. The Vice President observed the great opportunities made possible by continental Africa in the agro-food sector. Given its need for raw materials, Europe should therefore invest heavily in Africa, for example through the creation of agro-industrial districts in strategic areas.

