DG Enterprise and industry

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SPEECH

I would like to start by thanking the hosts – the European Satellite Operators' Association and Eurospace – for this event. I am happy to see so many representatives of the various sectors providing satellite-based services. The services you provide are the backbone of the whole space industry.

Space has a big potential for our societies and everyday lives. **Satellite-based technology is key in realizing this potential by connecting us to Space and providing many solutions and services to the citizens**.

We, in Europe, can already rely on a world-class industry to develop and deliver Satellite Communication services. Those services are key in **delivering information** – one of the most important resources of the growing sectors of the digital society. Satellite communications contribute to several actions proposed in the Digital Agenda for Europe, notably to **closing the broadband gap in low density populated areas**, and in providing cross-border **digital services**.

Space creates a unique **opportunity to boost the economic performance of our continent**. It is no coincidence that Space is an integral part of EU 2020 strategy which aims at smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

But we are not only inward-looking. Our investment in space, such as in EU flagship programmes Galileo and Copernicus, has a worldwide potential to bring considerable benefits to societies. We are working with a number of countries around the world on how to bring these benefits to their citizens.

The socio-economic benefits from both Galileo and Copernicus are considerable, including in their capacity to mitigate risks and enhance global stability, which are the themes of this conference.

Galileo, the European global satellite-based navigation system, will be a fully integrated system that will provide services to transport, but also financial and communications activities, public utilities, security, humanitarian operations and emergency services. That is why the Commission has geared its efforts over the last years towards the objective of providing first Galileo services as early as possible.

Copernicus, the European Programme for the establishment of a European capacity for Earth Observation, provides information that helps to understand how our planet and its climate are changing.

Copernicus is a unique programme that has no comparison in the world. The benefits of such a programme are estimated to be 4 to 10 times bigger than the amounts invested. Copernicus has therefore a considerable potential for citizens and businesses.

The political and economic 'weight' of the EU in space is growing, and so is our responsibility in turning this weight into tangible and effective solutions. The EU is likely to devote **more than €11 billion to space activities over the next seven years**. Galileo and Copernicus will be the main beneficiaries of this funding.

The third main beneficiary will be **Horizon 2020 Space Research Programme**, which is placed under the heading 'Industrial Leadership'. This means that the main objective will be to strengthen the competitiveness and innovation potential of the European Space sector.

EU investment in space will **open up new opportunities for businesses in Europe.** But we need to do more. Without a vibrant space industry in Europe, we will not be able to benefit from our investments.

The Commission therefore adopted last February a **Communication on EU Space Industrial Policy**, which seeks to release the potential for growth in the space sector.

We have set out a number of targets to achieve that, such as:

- to increase industry skill levels,
- to make finance and investment more readily available,

- to ensure the EU's independence in space
- and also to reshape the EU's legislative framework to make it a driver for industry.

These initiative will be complemented by our recently proposed **‘EU Space surveillance and tracking support programme’**, a significant contribution to increase the safety of satellite operations. It will help us to reduce collision risks, and to better inform public authorities about uncontrolled re-entries of inactive satellites or space debris.

I would like to conclude by highlighting our shared responsibility in delivering many of the goals and activities I have mentioned. Many of you present here today are closely associated with our efforts to build Galileo and Copernicus, and I am grateful for that. It is therefore our shared responsibility to make sure that we achieve it in timely and successful manner.
Thank you all for your attention.