



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President

The Commission would like to thank the Camera dei Deputati for its Opinion on the Commission Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Space Strategy for Europe {COM (2016) 705 final}.

Space is a strategic sector for governments, enterprises and modern societies. It generates extensive technological benefits, creates highly qualified jobs and contributes to other sectors and policies, notably the digital agenda, telecommunications, energy, transport, climate change, environment, security and defence. The European space sector is a global leader and Europe hosts some of the elite space companies and world-class research centres at the origin of key discoveries.

However, competition becomes fierce with the emergence of new players, public and private, innovative technologies and new business models which challenge the traditional way of working.

With the Space Strategy for Europe, the Commission proposes an ambitious and common European approach to space for the next 15 years. Europe should remain a global space player and a partner of choice on the international scene. The objective of the Strategy is to ensure that the European economy and society fully benefit from the space solutions and services. The Joint Statement on shared vision and goals signed on 26 October 2016 between the European Union and the European Space Agency is a tangible sign that European institutional actors, i.e. the Member States, the European Space Agency and the European Union are determined to progress in the same direction.

With its solid space industry and research network, its expertise and experience in the space sector and its flagship programmes, such as the Vega launchers, Italy offers valuable benefits to the European space services portfolio and the Commission welcomes its contribution and engagement.

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President of the Camera dei Deputati
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The Commission confirms that it entirely shares the position expressed by the Camera dei Deputati on the importance of responding to new security threats and of fully exploiting the potential dual-use synergies in the European space programmes.

The Commission takes good note of the constructive comments of the Camera dei Deputati as regards a possible extended role for the European Investment Bank, enhanced synergies between the European Union's and the European Space Agency's actions, an evolution of the procurement procedures, and the need to ensure an autonomous and safe European access to space.

The Commission welcomes the engagement of the Camera dei Deputati at this stage of the implementation of the Space Strategy and will take its Opinion and the suggestions it contains as well as other contributions received into account during the implementation. Member States and other stakeholders will be consulted on the proposed measures.

2017 will be another crucial year for the European Union's activities in space with the mid-term review of the two flagship programmes, the European Global Navigation Satellite Systems and Copernicus, the preparation of a governmental satellite communication initiative and preparatory work for a possible evolution of the Space Surveillance and Tracking support framework.

The Commission looks forward to continuing the political dialogue with the Camera dei Deputati in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Elżbieta Bienkowska
Member of the Commission*