

**2023 SEVILLE SPACE SUMMIT  
JOINT EU-ESA INFORMAL MEETING  
PRESIDENCIES DECLARATION**

The joint EU-ESA informal meeting being part of the 2023 Space Summit held in Seville explored how European space activities could best contribute to advance sustainable and green European policy ambitions, how to ensure a pioneering role for Europe in safeguarding the Earth and the space environment for future generations, as well as how to maximize the potential of increased commercialization across different domains of the European space sector. Following the discussion and exchange of views during the Joint EU-ESA informal meeting, the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the German Chairmanship of the ESA Council at Ministerial Level summarize the following understanding resulting from the discussion:

**Using space to advance the green transition in Europe, to take effective actions on climate change and to strengthen climate resilience**

The essential contribution of European space activities and technologies to deliver on the European Union Green Deal, national policy initiatives and netzero objectives as well as support to monitoring, mitigation and adaptation to climate change was highlighted. In this regard, it was concurred on the need to secure adequate resources to research and development, as well as to optimize the operational activities of Copernicus as it continues to evolve and expand as a civil Earth observation programme driven by growing user requirements, embracing new technologies and paradigms working with third party missions and using opportunities within the New Space sector, and addressing emerging challenges. It was also recognized that national missions, operational EUMETSAT missions and ESA research missions contribute significantly to a better understanding of our climate system and better management of natural resources and sustainability.

The need to maintain the state-of-the-art capacity and to ensure the continuity of current space and in situ observations and services, and the full, uninterrupted and timely development and deployment of the planned Copernicus Sentinel Expansion missions was acknowledged. Therefore, the urgency to find a solution in accordance with the established milestone to meet the established Copernicus funding needs was emphasized, including for the uninterrupted and timely development of all Sentinel Expansion Missions and the third unit of the new CO<sub>2</sub> monitoring mission. Achieving this aim swiftly will reaffirm the European leadership on Earth observation capacity, using Copernicus for climate monitoring, adaptation and mitigation and at the same time sending a clear sign of political support to this worldwide reference programme on its twenty-fifth anniversary.

The EU climate ambitions for 2030 and 2050 were recalled and wide support for promoting the use and usefulness of space data and services for the green transition was expressed. For example, Copernicus provides unique climate information to fight climate change and preserve biodiversity and ecosystems. The European Commission, ESA and EUSPA have been working on creating a space data economy and uptake of space data and services, that provide European decision-makers, industry, academia and society with essential tools and solutions, including e.g. for smart green transportation, smart agriculture, and smart management of energy. These initiatives would benefit from joint efforts by key European space stakeholders, including Member States, the European Commission, ESA, EUSPA and EUMETSAT. ESA's Space For Green Future Accelerator contributes to these activities.

Recalling the current climate impact of any economic activity, including related to space it was therefore sought to reduce the carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions associated with space programmes, including industrial activities and operations, throughout their full life cycle and value chains. An ambitious but credible definition of objectives and reduction measures, both at global level and at organization level in line with Member States' and the EU's objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero in 2050 and "ESA environmental objectives to Climate Neutrality of Europe" was identified as the next step.

The ever-growing number of climate-induced crises and their immediate and long-term implications on sustainable economic growth and welfare, as well as the need to better protect natural resources and biodiversity, were also acknowledged. Addressing these requires cooperation among all European stakeholders, including Member States, the European Commission, ESA, EUMETSAT and the private sector on the basis of established roles and responsibilities to work together in order to strengthen the resilience of citizens and economic actors through the enhanced use of space-based data and services whilst promoting biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources.

### **Safeguarding the benefits of space for future generations through sustainable space activities**

The discussions demonstrated our reliance on space programmes, services and data, as well as their increasing strategic safety relevance. The actions taken by ESA and the EU to guarantee the long-term sustainability of outer space activities were acknowledged. The need to position Europe to play a leading role in further developing a global framework for sustainability standards and to further increase Europe's contribution to safety of space operations was highlighted.

Technological developments were identified as a key element in achieving these objectives. This also includes increasing services and capabilities to develop capacities associated with in-orbit servicing, debris mitigation and removal, space weather and logistic services, so that Europe can further develop flexible competitive and sustainable space infrastructures, designed to reduce the impact of space activities as called, for example, in the dark and quiet skies initiative.

### **Increasing commercialization in the European space ecosystem**

Acknowledging the increasing role of private sector activities in space, it was recognized that an increased use of commercial approaches will create a more vibrant space ecosystem enabling more cost-effective and innovative solutions across different segments of the European space sector. In this vein, the value of increased competition and procurement of space services and, thus, of strengthening the public sector's role as anchor customers of spacerelated services, infrastructures and data, was acknowledged and welcomed, alongside the need for continued cooperation in support of space entrepreneurship among all actors involved including the European Commission, ESA, EUSPA and Member States.

### **Securing autonomous, reliable and cost-effective access to space for Europe**

The unprecedented difficult situation of Europe's autonomous access to space could affect and undermine the implementation of ongoing and planned EU and ESA space programmes. Therefore, the immediate need to secure Europe's autonomous, reliable cost-effective access to space was underlined. At the same time, it was highlighted that a European solution based on the evolution of launch services should be promptly proposed and agreed, involving all relevant stakeholders and considering ongoing developments, ranging from large to small size and new space launch solutions.

Therefore, a more service-driven approach, based on a new procurement approach and a framework bringing in more competition among all European launch services, placing contracts as anchor customers to aggregate and increase demand from institutional actors in Europe, is necessary to ensure Europe's autonomous, reliable and cost-effective access to space in the future, as well as to secure appropriate launch conditions from European space ports.

Seville, 7 November 2023