

CONFERENCE
"THE AMBITIONS OF EUROPE IN SPACE FOR ENTERPRISES AND CIVIL SOCIETY"

Plenary session on EGNOS/Galileo, GMES and space exploration: governance and responsibilities

Dear Mr Vice-President Tajani,

Dear Mr Minister Mora,

Dear Mr President Van den Brande,

Honorable Ms Jensen,

Dear Mr Director Weissenberg,

Dear Mr Director Liebig,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning,

First I would like to thank the European Commission and the organisers of this major conference for their kind invitation. As a preliminary comment, I would like to say that the European Economic and Social Committee is happy to contribute to the event by co-organising with the Committee of the Regions a networking dinner in their premises tonight.

Let us start by a positive statement: today the EU's space policy is well on track:

- First the **launch of EGNOS**, Galileo's forerunner and a promising global positioning tool, has demonstrated that achievements are starting to become a reality. It is not just another announcement. EGNOS means both **a solution and new prospects for companies and the general public.**

- Second the **Lisbon treaty**, which I am convinced will eventually come into force despite delays, will equip the EU and all its Members States with a substantial space policy. Of course the EU already has a space policy but its **capacity to act will be enhanced** and European efforts can be stepped up with even better results.

Though well on track space policy still require substantial public and private support and it is now up to us, all parties involved, to **flesh out Europe's space policy**:

- In view of global and European challenges the EU has to be more forward-looking than ever: how can the EU remain the main driver in the **fight against climate change** and have its views taken into consideration at global level? How can the EU ensure the **security** of its citizens and provide relevant help to others? How can the EU be a **respected and listened player internationally**? On all these points, space applications will improve Europe's overall capacity, in particular when our global partners are moving forward too.
- Space applications and a sustained effort towards space exploration are about "**making it possible**". Galileo and GMES are powerful **tools to help implement public policies** and design new measures to meet new needs. **All spheres of society will benefit** from space applications from farmers to pilots, through the general public, elderly people and companies. By providing better and timely information, the advantages in terms of **comfort, safety, effectiveness, or reliability** will be considerable. These advantages already exist today but we need to go much further.
- As the voice of civil society in Europe, the European Economic and Social Committee feels that all **future perspectives** linked to space should rely on **innovation and the promotion of European competitiveness**, as this will make a difference in people's lives:
 - All companies, including SMEs, active in the space industry should be involved in **making Europe a leader in this sector**. **Effective technology transfer** from these cutting edge companies towards all other sectors and companies is key to enabling them to **offer innovative goods or services**.

- The promotion of space industry is also a good way to **stimulate the economy and job creation**. It is typically an example of knowledge society with **quality jobs requiring high qualification**.
 - New space applications will offer opportunities we cannot even imagine yet. They need to be **carefully monitored** to guarantee their success and also need to enjoy a **large pan-European support from civil society**. On these aspects in particular, the European Economic and Social Committee can provide a **key contribution** by making sure that the European civil society at large is kept aware of the developing applications and their **possible social, economic and environmental impacts**.
- Dear colleagues, my main message to you is that civil society is at the heart of the success of space applications:
 - To be viable such applications must **meet civil society's needs**, and all its components from end-users to companies, through trade unions should successfully promote space applications and help define Europe's space policy.
 - All stakeholders, national governments, companies, EU institutions, will have to develop **new governance structures** with both greater coordination and a clear distribution of responsibilities. This aspect may be less visible but certainly not less important as **our individual efforts will be successful only if we genuinely join forces towards a common goal**. The European Economic and Social Committee is ready to play its part and contribute to this process by **responding to consultations** from EU institutions as well as by **mobilising its networks and partners**. It could help all spheres of civil society be aware of developments in European space policy and help decision-makers to take into account citizens' expectations. As it did last year when it hosted the first Space conference, the European Economic and Social Committee can play a pivotal role in making this happen.

- As a final word, I would like to stress that the challenge of space is that of knowledge society at a global level. We are all responsible for taking it up. It is not the first time the EU is faced with such an exceptional challenge and I trust Europe is up to the task. I am convinced space can be the EU's new success story, helping to strengthen the common vision Europeans have of themselves and making the EU more cohesive.
- Thank you for your attention.