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PRESS RELEASE

CONCLUSIONS OF THE INFORMAL MEETING OF EUROPEAN MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR SPACE

President Macron delivered an address today, Wednesday, 16 February 2022 in Toulouse, in which he outlined his vision for French and European space strategy, during an informal Competitiveness Council meeting on space, which brought together European Ministers responsible for Space and the European Commission, and a European Space Agency (ESA) Ministerial Council meeting, which were both chaired by **Bruno Le Maire**, Minister for the Economy, Finance and the Recovery. These two meetings covered four major issues surrounding the development of European space policy:

- European Commission projects related to implementing an EU constellation for connectivity and defining common rules governing space traffic management
- EU roadmap regarding Earth and climate observation from space
- Europe's objectives in terms of science and space exploration

During his speech, President Macron stressed that space is an essential component of Europe's sovereignty, in spheres such as communications, Earth observation, climate change monitoring and navigation. He praised the EU's many strengths, as exemplified by the Galileo and Copernicus programmes, which now have billions of daily users. At a time when several countries have manifested their intention to send human missions to the Moon and Mars, President Macron has called on Europe to define its space ambitions.

Joining this effort, President Macron announced the creation of an expert group tasked with analysing attainable options and putting forward recommendations to Member States.

1) Informal Competitiveness Council meeting of European Ministers responsible for Space

Back in November 2021 Member States had agreed that action needed to be taken in the area of space traffic management. During the informal meeting held today, they agreed to work over the coming months on tangible proposals to improve space traffic management. The objective is twofold: increase Europe's operational capacities and put forward common rules at EU level that will subsequently be advocated at international level.

EU Member States also welcomed the Commission's proposal for a regulation on the governance and financing of the Union Secure Connectivity Programme, which it presented on Tuesday, 15 February 2022. They affirmed Europe's political objective of equipping Europe with connectivity capabilities through autonomous satellites, at a time when similar projects are gaining traction abroad and the frequencies and orbits necessary for carrying out such projects are scarce resources. Emphasis was put on the need to do more work to spell out the objectives, requirements, governance and financing of these initiatives.

Taking into account these priorities, the French Presidency will continue the work undertaken within the bodies of the Council of the European Union to set out, along with Member States, the details of this new constellation for secure connectivity as part of a regulation.

2) ESA Ministerial Council meeting

During the ESA Ministerial Council meeting, ESA Member States reaffirmed the need to define the future direction of European space exploration policy. The proposal to create an EU expert group tasked with advising on possible options in terms of space exploration and human spaceflight was hailed. The work will be presented to Ministers responsible for Space during upcoming ministerial meetings in 2022 and 2023.

Lastly, the Ministers agreed on the need to fast track the deployment of space resources in order to monitor and fight climate change.

3) France 2030

President Macron reiterated the fact that the "France 2030" long-term investment plan will earmark €1.5bn for the emergence, within five years, of a French reusable launcher, New Space stakeholders and the constellation for secure connectivity. Bruno Le Maire made a point during the space summit in Toulouse to give a progress update on the space objectives contained in the "France 2030" plan. After the launch

of an initial call for projects to fund micro- and mini-launchers in December 2021, it was announced that new calls for projects will be presented in the coming weeks to support the development of initiatives in such areas as in-orbit services, space surveillance and connectivity constellations. These calls for projects could be rounded out by public procurement support provided by the National Centre for Space Studies (CNES) on behalf of the French government, so as to meet the needs of EU businesses and become a long-term player in the global space landscape.

The implementation of the space component of the “France 2030” plan is fully under way, driven by an especially thriving and ambitious industrial base, and a strategic vision supported at the highest level of the French government.

Bruno Le Maire said: “Today we reached an agreement with other Member States on the need to provide Europe with the resources to create a constellation for autonomous connectivity. This is a great step forward and a major act of sovereignty. What is more, we set the framework under which the satellite constellation must be envisioned: economic profitability must be guaranteed, SMEs will need to be brought to the fore and the constellation should not take away from other EU space projects. Governments, engineers, astronauts, industrialists: all of us are united in maintaining Europe’s status as a space power.”

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