



ESA AND ESOA SIGN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO COLLABORATE ON PILOT PROJECTS

**Signing of Memorandum of Understanding between ESA and ESOA
*Paris, 23rd March 2007***

23rd March 2007 – The European Satellite Operators Association (ESOA) and European Space Agency (ESA) today signed a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate on pilot projects in order to demonstrate and develop the use of satellite communications technology for new, user-driven applications. This collaboration with ESOA fits into ESA's plan to promote new applications through pilot projects that will exploit and integrate various space and non-space systems. The objective is to facilitate a systematic use of existing European Space Capabilities (satellite communications, positioning, earth-observation and other competences) to address complex global challenges such as development aid, energy, public health, education and safety.

This Memorandum of Understanding is in line with ESOA's objective of promoting satellite communications technology for new applications and with ESA's role to further the research and development of space projects in Europe. Michael Butler, Chairman of ESOA and President and COO of Inmarsat, said: "This collaboration will allow satellite operators to show the essential difference they can make to the achievement of public sector objectives and in contributing to important global challenges. We are also happy to be able to develop our relationship with the European Space Agency at a time when the European Community and ESA are preparing a common European Space Policy".

Amnon Ginati, Head of ESA's Integrated Applications inter-directorates Task Force, said: "This collaboration with ESOA represents another step towards achieving ESA's objective to promote, in close cooperation with the European Commission, user-driven integrated applications projects since ESOA represents an important sector of European industry.



With its contribution, ESA will be able to develop pilot projects, promoting new service areas that integrate space capability, technology and other solutions.”

The common initiative was born out of events organised by ESOA in October 2006 designed to raise the profile of satellite services. At that time, ESOA cooperated with UN agencies to show the difference satellite services could make in the fields of development, humanitarian aid and emergencies.

ESOA is the association of European satellite operators, together representing a combined annual turnover in excess of 3 billion euros. The association comprises all European based satellite operators and continues to expand its membership and its influence. More information can be found at www.esoa.net

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