



'50 Years of Europe – 50 Years of Satellites'

ESOA demonstrates satellite broadband capabilities at exclusive event in Athens, Greece *Athens, 23rd May 2007*

23rd May 2007 – The European Satellite Operators' Association (ESOA), in cooperation with the Greek PTT OTE, today hosted VIPs from across Europe at an exclusive event in Athens to celebrate the 50th anniversaries of the foundation of the European Community and the launch of the world's first satellite. Christodoulos Protopapas, newly elected Chairman of the Association, welcomed European Commissioner for Health Markos Kyprianou, Greek Transport and Communication Minister Michalis Liapis and former Turkish Transport and Telecommunications Minister Binali Yildirim alongside other VIPs to witness live link-ups via satellite with remote areas around Europe.

ESOA demonstrated the ability of satellite operators to deliver on the essential needs of those citizens that live outside connected urban areas by using live satellite communications. Commissioner Kyprianou was invited to speak via satellite to an explorer travelling around Africa to raise the profile of malaria prevention equipped with a mobile satellite terminal. Minister Liapis addressed pupils in a school located in a remote Greek village that benefits from internet provided via satellite while Former Minister Yildirim had the opportunity to speak to a remote telemedicine site in Turkey. ESOA Chairman, Christodoulos Protopapas, said, "Policy makers and governments need to start appreciating what this technology can do now and not lose time waiting for other solutions to become available. A live link shows the immediate power of satellites to connect huge distances with minimal physical infrastructure".

Commissioner Kyprianou said "Bringing ICT and healthcare together is not simply a matter of digitising and communicating matters of health, but rather opening a new world of doing things in ways that were not possible or even conceivable before. ICTs, such as satellites, assist us today in disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment, health monitoring and lifestyle



management thus bringing better opportunities to European citizens for improved access to health systems”

Satellites are powerful tools for communication that can connect people today without the immediate need for heavy infrastructure roll-out. Investments in satellites have already been made and the benefits of that investment can be used now.

Most importantly, existing satellites are specifically able to serve those areas that would otherwise remain completely disconnected for want of a terrestrial telecoms infrastructure. As such they are the only immediate bridge that exists to close the gap between those now connected to the internet and those who are not. Despite this, millions of European households remain unconnected today and, experts predicts, will remain unconnected in 2012 – an unacceptable fact in a world that is celebrating 50 years of space and satellite technology.

ESOA is the association of European satellite operators, together representing a combined annual turnover in excess of 3 billion euros. The association represents 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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For more information please contact:

Aarti Holla-Maini
Secretary General
t: +32.2.550.35.75
e: sg@esoa.net
w: www.esoa.net