

Brussels, 12 January 2006

GALILEO: EU and the Republic of Korea seal their agreement

Following exchanges that lasted for six months, negotiations on the Republic of Korea's participation in Europe's satellite radionavigation programme reached approval today. The agreement which paves the way for the country's active participation in the programme was initialled in Brussels by Heinz Hilbrecht, Director, representing the European Commission, and by Counsellor Choi Jong Hyun, representing the Republic of Korea. Welcoming the outcome of the negotiations, Vice-President Jacques Barrot in charge of transport declared: "After the successful launch of the first GALILEO GIOVE-A satellite, this new agreement underlines, once again, the ever growing worldwide interest for the programme".

The agreement initialled today provides for co-operative activities in the areas of scientific research and training, industrial cooperation, trade and market development, standards, certification and regulatory measures, regional and local augmentations, etc.

The Republic of Korea, the fourth economical power in Asia, is a country mastering space technology and its applications. It is a producer and user of consumer electronic goods and systems for which satellite navigation brings effective competitive advantages since several years. The Republic of Korea is currently an active user of satellite navigation services in various sectors including transport, fleet management, science and geodesy.

The agreement initialled with the Republic of Korea, the first in 2006, confirms the ambition of the European Union to further stimulate international cooperation. The ever growing interest of third countries to participate in the GALILEO programme represents a big boost for the GNSS market, which is potentially considerable: 3 billion receivers and revenues of some €275 billion per year by 2020 worldwide, and the creation of more than 150.000 high qualified jobs in Europe alone.

Background

GALILEO is Europe's satellite radio navigation programme. It was launched on the initiative of the European Commission and developed jointly with the European Space Agency (ESA). It will prepare for the development of a new generation of universal services in areas such as transport, telecommunications, agriculture and fisheries. To date this technology, which promises to be highly profitable, is only available through the United States' GPS system and Russia's GLONASS system, both of which are financed and controlled by military authorities. The GALILEO programme will be administered and controlled by civilian authorities and offers a guarantee of quality and continuity which is essential for many applications. It is complementary with current systems and will increase the reliability and availability of navigation and positioning services worldwide.

For more information about GALILEO, please visit:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/energy_transport/galileo/index_en.htm

<http://www.esa.int/export/esaSA/navigation.html>

<http://www.galileoju.com>