



EUROPEAN DEFENCE AGENCY

PRESS RELEASE

POLAND AND SWEDEN EXPRESS THE INTENTION TO JOIN THE MULTINATIONAL SPACE-BASED IMAGING SYSTEM PROGRAMME

Brussels, 25 June 2010

Poland and Sweden announced their intention to join MUSIS, the MULTinational Space-based Imaging System, a collaborative EDA programme of six European Countries (**Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, France and Italy**) to enhance their future Earth Observation (EO) capabilities.

“This is most welcome”, said Alexander Weis, EDA’s Chief Executive. “The MUSIS project was brought to EDA to open up the participation to other Member States. The Polish and Swedish decisions show the added value of bringing such projects to the Agency.”

MUSIS aims to federate some of the next generation European military or dual use satellites for Earth Observation, such as the replacements for the French Helios II, the Italian CosmoSkyMed and the German SAR Lupe, and assure “access to space” for each of the contributing Member States (cMS) by common User Ground Stations.

Approved as a Category B project in March 2009 by the EDA Steering Board, MUSIS is open to participation of other EDA participating Member States, if their proposed contribution is acceptable to the existing contributing Members.

Marcin Idzik, Undersecretary of State for Armaments and Modernisation, and National Armaments Director of Poland said “Military space-based observation has been providing a cooperative venture for the past 20 years. The latest stage of cooperation, MUSIS, represents what could be referred to as the third generation of the cooperative model.” He added “From our perspective, the MUSIS programme is one of the most important EDA programmes.”

Gunnar Hult, Chief Scientist of the Swedish Defence Materiel Administration (FMV) and Deputy National Armaments Director of Sweden, said “FMV will initiate negotiations regarding this innovative step in Space-based Imaging System for surveillance, reconnaissance and observation. MUSIS will be critical to ensure space-based imaging capabilities, which are essential in the context of CSDP – as identified in the Agency’s Capability Development Plan”.

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MUSIS

Background information

The MUSIS Programme entered the Agency in March 2009 as a Category B project. EDA is adding value by offering its expertise in dealing with multinational programmes through flexible and collaborative procedures. In particular, EDA's role in MUSIS is related to seeking possible interest in the programme by other EU Member States, according to the conditions defined by the MUSIS cMS for new Members. The Mandate that the MUSIS cMS gave to EDA also identifies the Agency as the appropriate body to liaise with Research and Technology projects that could be potentially of interest for MUSIS such as those included in EU Commission Framework Programme 7 and ESDP related initiatives such as the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) and the European Data Relay Satellite (EDRS). As a consequence, the EDA will also represent MUSIS nations' interests in any institutional forum where Defence and Security issues related to Space capabilities are discussed, and synergies between civil and military EU Space capabilities are being identified.

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Background information

The European Defence Agency (EDA) was established by the Council on 12 July 2004. It is designed "to support the Council and the Member States in their effort to improve European defence capabilities in the field of crisis management and to sustain the CSDP as it stands now and develops in the future". More specifically, the Agency is ascribed four functions, relating to:

- a) defence capabilities development;
- b) armaments cooperation;
- c) the European defence technological and industrial base and defence equipment market;
- d) research and technology.

These functions all relate to improving Europe's defence performance, by promoting coherence in place of fragmentation.

The EDA is an Agency of the European Union. EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton is Head of the Agency, chairwoman of the Steering Board, which acts under the Council's authority and within the framework of guidelines issued by the Council.