



**EUROPEAN UNION**

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## **EU launches negotiations on an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities**

The European Union officially launched on Tuesday in Vienna the multilateral diplomatic process to discuss and negotiate its initiative for an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities. Under the chairmanship of Maciej Popowski, Deputy Secretary General of the European External Action Service, 110 participants from more than 40 countries gathered for this multilateral meeting, at which the European Union introduced a revised version of its draft Code, based on comments received in bilateral meetings with various partners. Substantial negotiations on the basis of this text will start at the Multilateral Experts Meeting of October 2012 in New York, which will be open to the participation of all UN Member States, with a view to adopt the Code in 2013.

Space activities are expanding and their importance is crucial. Space is a resource for all countries in the world, and those which do not yet have space activities will have them in the future. Therefore the EU considers necessary to ensure greater security in outer space and believes a pragmatic and incremental process can assist in achieving this goal. The EU initiative for an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities was launched at the end of 2008 as a means to achieve enhanced safety and security in outer space through the development and implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures.

The proposed Code would be applicable to all outer space activities conducted by States or non-governmental entities, and would lay down the basic rules to be observed by space faring nations in both civil and defence space activities. This initiative is already supported by a number of space-faring nations, among them the US, Japan and India.

At the meeting, the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) officially launched its project "Facilitating the Process for the Development of an international Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities", which – in parallel with the diplomatic process – aims to facilitate information dissemination and exchange of views on the concept of this Code of Conduct.

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