

Brussels, 5th September 2011

José Manuel Barroso
President of the European
Commission
1049 Brussels
Belgium

Dear Mr. Barroso,

We, the undersigned Members of the European Parliament, have read with great interest the Communication “A budget for Europe 2020” as it is the first time a budget for the development of the new EU in space competence is proposed.

However, we are deeply concerned regarding the GMES programme funding.

The budget level recommended by the EC in its proposal for the next EU Multiannual Financial Framework (834M€/year), should be considered adequate to ensure the sustainability of the operational programme after 2013. GMES services continue to be provided to users and that, by developing downstream services, it offers opportunities to SMEs and to foster innovation in Europe.

GMES is politically and technically the most advanced programme in the world. It has the potential to place Europe at the head of environmental monitoring, risk and security management whilst providing invaluable information to European decision makers and citizens. It is a key driver for sustainable development in Europe, it enables major societal changes through access to environmental information, crucial for growth and competitiveness. Moreover it is essential for environmental treaty verification, for development aid and for humanitarian disaster relief.

Unfortunately, **the EC abandons the GMES programme** as it proposes to have it financed outside the EU budget. This stands in complete contradiction with the EU2020 Strategy, with recent messages from the Council of the EU¹, the continuous support of the Parliament and with the long standing affirmation by EC for years that GMES is a flagship programme of the EU.

The EC itself² considers that the decision to fund GMES outside the MFF will “*create high uncertainty for GMES [...], the EU would withdraw from GMES while it has not reached its maturity yet. It would be more than likely that this option would mean a discontinuation of GMES as no other partners would be in a position to take over the prominent role played so far by the EU in structuring and supporting – both politically and financially - GMES. It would lead to sunken costs and past investment would be lost*”. We share this view and stress that the GMES project is running on-time and within the costs foreseen.

¹ Council Resolution "Global challenges: taking full benefit of European space systems", 16864/10; Council Conclusions on "Towards a space strategy for the European Union that benefits its citizens", 10901/11

² SEC(2011) 868 final, “Commission staff working paper: A Budget for Europe 2020: the current system of funding, the challenges ahead, the results of stakeholders consultation and different options on the main horizontal and sectoral issues”

Outside the EU Framework, GMES will lose its European dimension and become the project of a few Member States. This will result in a new definition of data policy by the contributors that cannot guarantee “full and open access” for all Member States.

We therefore invite the Commission to reconsider its financial proposal and ask for GMES to be financed within the next EU MFF with a predetermined annual budget.

Yours sincerely,

Vittorio Prodi	Elisabetta Gardini	Herbert Reul
Damien Abad	Norbert Glante	Robert Rochefort
Kader Arif	Ana Gomes	Zuzana Roithova
Pervenche Berès	Roberto Gualtieri	Licia Ronzulli
Frieda Brepoels	Karin Kadenbach	Oreste Rossi
Antonio Cancian	Jo Leinen	Potito Salatto
Lara Comi	Bill Newton Dunn	Salvatore Tatarella
António Fernando Correia de Campos	Angelika Niebler	Patrice Tirolien
Andrea Cozzolino	Aldo Patriciello	Giommaria Uggias
Arnaud Danjean	Andrés Perelló Rodriguez	Lambert van Nistelrooij
Rachida Dati	Sirpa Pietikäinen	Axel Voss
Christine de Veyrac	Mario Pirillo	Henri Weber
Christian Ehler	Gianni Pittella	Iva Zanicchi
Carlo Fidanza	Pavel Poc	
Jacqueline Foster	Miloslav Ransdorf	
	Vladimír Remek	

Cc:

Barbara Kudrycka, Polish Minister of Science and Higher Education, Presidency-in-Office of the Council of the European Union

Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council

Antonio Tajani, Vice-President of the European Commission, European Commissioner for Industry and Entrepreneurship

Attachment: list of signatures