

EU/USA Agreement: setting forth security procedures for the launch of Galileo satellites from U.S. territory

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PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the European Union, an agreement between the European Union, of the one part, and the United States of America, of the other part, setting forth Security Procedures for the Launch of Galileo Satellites from U.S. territory.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: following the unilateral withdrawal of Russian personnel from the Guiana Space Centre and the cancellation of two Soyuz launches in April and September 2022 as well as the announced delay of Ariane-6, the EU had to find alternatives to resume urgently the launches of Galileo satellites in order to ensure the proper operation of the Galileo system which is part of the Union Space Programme established by Regulation (EU) 2021/696 of the European Parliament and of the Council ('Union Space Programme Regulation').

After conducting technical feasibility studies on other available launch vehicles, the Commission concluded that the only launch vehicles compatible with Galileo satellites are provided by manufacturers in the United States.

In January 2023, the Commission, together with security experts designated by several Member States, conducted a visit of launch sites in the United States. The visit ascertained the feasibility of launching from those sites in the United States with **appropriate security measures** in respect of security sensitive material and documentation of the Galileo satellites, including European Union classified information.

In view of ensuring the security of information included in Galileo satellites, a **legally binding agreement** with the United States is necessary to protect the integrity of the Galileo satellites on United States' territory and the confidentiality of EU classified information not releasable to the United States that is contained within the satellites or related to the satellites' launch.

Any exchange or provision of classified information between the EU and the United States for the purposes of the launches of Galileo satellites must comply with the requirements set out in the Agreement between the EU and the government of the United States of America on the security of classified information and its security arrangement.

CONTENT: under this proposal, the Commission proposes to the Council to adopt a decision approving the conclusion of the Security Agreement between the European Union, of the one part, and the United States of the other part, setting forth security procedures for the launch of Galileo satellites from U.S. territory.

This Security Agreement is necessary to enable launches of satellites that will complete the Galileo satellite navigation constellation, which is indispensable in order to perform the task of providing long-term, state-of-the-art and secure positioning, navigation and timing services as required by the Union Space Programme Regulation.

Galileo supports key economic sectors, in particular telecommunications, energy and transport and the protection of critical infrastructures thereof.

The satellite navigation services offered by the Galileo component of the Union Space Programme support a number of EU priorities including the Green Deal, a Europe fit for the Digital Age, an Economy that works for People and a Stronger Europe in the World.

The Galileo satellite navigation services also contribute to peace and security and sustainable development in the world.