



## LUXEMBOURG TO LAUNCH FRAMEWORK TO SUPPORT THE FUTURE USE OF SPACE RESOURCES

Luxembourg, February 3, 2016 – The Luxembourg Government announced a series of measures to position Luxembourg as a European hub in the exploration and use of space resources. Amongst the key steps undertaken, as part of the [spaceresources.lu](http://spaceresources.lu) initiative, will be the development of a legal and regulatory framework confirming certainty about the future ownership of minerals extracted in space from Near Earth Objects (NEO's) such as asteroids.

Luxembourg is the first European country to announce its intention to set out a formal legal framework which ensures that private operators working in space can be confident about their rights to the resources they extract, i.e. rare minerals from asteroids. Such a legal framework will be worked out in full consideration of international law. Luxembourg is eager to engage with other countries on this matter within a multilateral framework.

Luxembourg will also invest in relevant R&D projects and consider direct capital investment in companies active in this field.

The SpaceResources.lu initiative will nurture an exciting and entirely new space industry. This industry will offer unprecedented access to mineral resources to be used essentially in Earth-orbit and beyond. The aim is to stimulate economic growth on Earth and offer new horizons in space exploration.

Luxembourg already has a strong track record in related sectors, with satellite operator SES, established in Luxembourg 30 years ago and now a major global player in its field.

The budget allocated to SpaceResources.lu will be part of the national space budget that will be defined in the frame of the preparation of the Luxembourg contribution to the next multiannual budget of the European Space Agency to be decided in December 2016. The government will decide on new means for a wide range of new activities and initiatives, including this one.

Luxembourg's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Economy Étienne Schneider, announced the spaceresources.lu initiative today: "Our aim is to open access to a wealth of previously unexplored mineral resources on lifeless rocks hurling through space, without damaging natural habitats. We will support the long-term economic development of new, innovative activities in the space and satellite industries as a key high-tech sector for

Luxembourg. At first, our aim is to carry out research in this area, which at a later stage can lead to more concrete activities in space.”

Jean-Jacques Dordain, the former Director General of the European Space Agency (ESA) and advisor to Luxembourg Government on SpaceResources.lu, said: “This initiative is a clear demonstration that Europeans are innovative and able to take risks when the stakes are high. While futuristic, the project is based on solid grounds, i.e. technical prowess that already exists in Europe and around the world. ”

Simon P. Worden, Chairman of the Breakthrough Prize Foundation said: “Humanity is on the verge of expansion into the solar system – and then beyond. Using the resources we find there is essential – not only for our expansion into space but also to ensure continued prosperity here on Earth.”

Rick Tumlinson, Co-founder and Chair of the Board of Deep Space Industries stated: "By opening up the resources of space, Luxembourg will help take the pressure off the Earth."

Chris Lewicki, President and CEO of Planetary Resources stated: "We commend the Government of Luxembourg in leading the world by establishing this new resource industry, thereby enabling the economic development of near-Earth asteroid resources. Planetary Resources looks forward to working with Luxembourg."

Karim Michel Sabbagh, President and CEO of SES stated: "We welcome Luxembourg's visionary initiative to take, once again, a pioneering step in space technology and further leverage our shared knowledge and experience. We look forward to contributing with our unique capabilities to these future activities."

Yves Elsen, Chairperson of the Luxembourg Space Cluster stated: “Over the past three decades, Luxembourg has built up extensive know-how in world-class space related activities. Luxembourg can write history once again by further sustaining the attractiveness of the country for a host of next generation space activities.”

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