

**Statement of Mr Brunet on the GEO plenary,
Geneva, 16 January 2014**

- Copernicus is the European Union's flagship earth observation programme.
- Space based observations and services as well as in-situ observations are the three equally important building blocks of the Copernicus programme. The European Commission, with the support of EU member states and our key partners ESA and EUMETSAT, is making important efforts and steps in further developing and upgrading these three components.
- We are looking forward to launching our first Sentinel satellite of the Copernicus programme later this year. The different Sentinel missions will provide Radar and Optical Earth Observation data to Copernicus Services and to other users.
- The Copernicus Services, namely Emergency Management, Land Monitoring, Marine Environment Monitoring, Atmosphere Monitoring and Climate Change Services are very relevant for the objectives of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) and link to the respective Societal Benefit Areas of GEO.

Copernicus programme is therefore recognized as the European Union's most important contribution to GEOSS.

- Copernicus services, although some of them in a pre-operational phase, have already demonstrated their usability and the effectiveness. In particular, I would like to emphasise that the Copernicus Services are also deployed globally, outside the borders of the European Union. To mention two cases only, Copernicus Emergency Management Service was activated in a rush mode in the case of last year's typhoon in Philippines and during the tropical storm in Somalia.
- The European Commission has made important steps recently in ensuring firm and long-term legal basis for this earth observation programme and smooth transition into its fully operational phase. The new Copernicus Regulation is poised to be adopted in spring this year. The Regulation focuses on the governance and the sustainable funding of the programme in its operational phase over the period of 2014-2020.

With this regulation and the adoption of the new Multiannual Financial Framework, the European Union is devoting 3.8 billion EUROS to the programme over the next seven-year period.

- Once again I would like to emphasise that the European Commission is supporting GEOSS Data Sharing principles. Moreover, the Commission is applying these principles to the Copernicus Programme. The European Commission's Delegated Regulation on Copernicus data and service information is setting the conditions for a free, full and open access to Copernicus data and information. This new Regulation grants to users all the rights necessary to exploit Copernicus data and information to the fullest.
- [On this occasion I would like to raise an important issue concerning the quality of Sentinel data. To observe the Earth, Sentinel1 and 3 are using a specific radiofrequency band prioritised for such satellite use, the 5.4 GHz band. Unfortunately, some GEO Member States recently expressed the willingness to free the 5.4GHz for the use Radio LAN, i.e. WiFi applications.

If allowed, this unlicensed use would, according to studies, dramatically deteriorate the quality of the Sentinel1 observation data. We should make sure that the Earth Observation communities oppose this modification in the allocation of the radiofrequency which would also affect other radar satellites using the same band.]

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- Copernicus Programme will be mostly operational for the GEO Post-2015 timeframe. European Commission also intends to tighten the links between the Copernicus and GEOSS in the future through the consistent integration of Copernicus products in the GEO Portal and by linking as much as possible Copernicus information and services to the GEONETCast and GEOSS Common Infrastructure.