

A Call to Boost European Space Exploration.

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Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and supported by Canada.

We, the Ministers of the Member States of the European Space Agency, assembled here today on the occasion of the International Space Summit in Paris, wishing to see Europe become a stronger partner in the international endeavour to explore outer space, declare the following :

1. Space is a strategic domain at the heart of economic prosperity, technological leadership and global influence. It drives scientific discovery, strengthens industrial competitiveness, accelerates innovation, enables commercial opportunities and reinforces diplomatic engagement. Those who invest and lead today will shape tomorrow's partnerships and opportunities.
2. As geopolitical competition intensifies and the importance of space continues to grow, exploration is becoming a source of strategic autonomy. Europe must therefore strengthen its capacity to pursue priorities and partnerships at the frontier of spaceflight. Achieving this ambition requires sustained political commitment, coordinated investment and a long-term vision to develop, maintain and advance critical exploration capabilities.
3. A stronger European ambition in space exploration is not an alternative to international cooperation – but the very foundation to reinforce existing partnerships and forge new ones. By mastering key technologies, developing strategic assets and undertaking ambitious missions, Europe will be able to pursue common objectives as a reliable and indispensable partner. Low Earth orbit and the Moon will be the proving grounds in the next era of space exploration, paving the way for increasingly complex missions to Mars.
4. Low Earth Orbit is a gateway to science, exploration, innovation and economic activity. As the ISS approaches its end of life, a new ecosystem is emerging that will be collaborative but also commercial and competitive. Europe needs sustained access to this environment. Developing a competitive European capability to transport astronauts would be a further decisive step to strengthen our technological and industrial base, secure access and position Europe as a central actor shaping opportunities in orbit.
5. The return to the Moon opens the next major chapter of exploration. The Moon is the ultimate proving ground for technologies, partnerships and norms that will accompany humankind's sustained presence in space and advance our journey to Mars, with a robotic landing on its surface marking an important milestone. Europe should take its place through balancing partnerships and targeted autonomy. By contributing critical systems and developing its own robotic capabilities and infrastructure assets, Europe can cooperate from a position of strength.
6. To secure its future in space exploration, Europe must translate ambition into sustainable economic opportunities. Competitive and commercially viable approaches will accelerate innovation, maximise the value of public investment and generate growth across the sector. A dynamic and competitive exploration ecosystem will strengthen Europe's industrial and technological base and enable it to remain at the forefront of innovation in a rapidly evolving domain.
7. Europe has the means, the talent and the partnerships to raise its collective ambition in space

exploration. Building on its scientific excellence, technological innovation, entrepreneurial spirit and tradition of cooperation, Europe should now translate its strengths into autonomous capabilities for Low Earth Orbit and significant contributions to lunar exploration. This requires coherent, coordinated and timely action commensurate with the pace of global developments. The time has come for a clear political direction.

Therefore, determined to

I. strengthen Europe's autonomy in space exploration where it matters, while deepening international cooperation;

II. develop key capabilities that secure European presence in Low Earth Orbit and enhance European participation on and around the Moon;

III. promote commercially viable, competitive and cost-effective approaches that reinforce Europe's industrial base and expand opportunities for innovation and growth ; and

IV. ensure that Europe remains a reliable and indispensable partner in humanity's next great endeavour in space,

we call on the European Space Agency to prepare without delay options required to translate this ambition into concrete and sustained action, for decision by ministers during the Intermediate Ministerial Meeting in December of this year.

Paris, 9 September 2026

<https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2026/09/10/a-call-to-boost-european-space-exploration>