

The future of aeronautical research

Brussels, May 11, 2017 – The AeroSpace and Defence Industries Association of Europe (ASD) welcomes the initiative of the European Parliament's Sky and Space Intergroup (SSI) to hold a high-level event aimed at discussing the future of aeronautical research.

Monika Hohlmeier, MEP and President of the Sky and Space Intergroup, opened the discussion by highlighting the vital role of research and innovation in ensuring the continued success and competitiveness of the European aeronautic sector. *"Aviation is one of Europe's sectors of excellence. It is also a research intensive sector dedicating more than 12% of its turnover to innovation and development. However, ambitious goals and the growing need for mobility within an increasing world-population require appropriate funding, including for collaborative research projects"* commented Mrs Hohlmeier. She continued: *"the European aeronautics industry has successfully built upon numerous European projects, especially the CleanSky and SESAR flagship programmes. This strong technological drive should continue and be reflected in the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework"*.

Mr **Robert-Jan Smits**, Director General of DG Research and Innovation, European Commission, outlined that *"Aviation has been the success story in Horizon 2020 and public-private partnerships strengthen the competitiveness of our sectors and extend the knowledge for better and faster airplanes consuming less energy"*. Well aware of the critical importance of innovation to prepare the future panorama of aeronautics, Mr Smits added: *"we are convinced that we have made the right choice by investing in research programmes like CleanSky and SESAR, however we shall not rest on our laurels – Europe needs to seize every opportunity to remain ahead and keep its leading position in the world, as well as pay particular attention to disruptive market creating innovation"*. Finally, Mr Smits stressed that: *"Our stakeholders should communicate more to the citizens the success of the European aviation research"*.

Mr **Paul Stein**, Chief Technology Officer, Rolls-Royce, reiterated that the Aerospace sector is entering an exciting new era where technological revolution is taking place alongside technological evolution and it is important that Europe stays at the forefront of this. *"Europe operates a successful connected enterprise in aerospace and the role of the EU in coordinating and funding future technology has been pivotal and will continue to be so"* Mr Stein highlighted. Europe has world class companies including Rolls Royce and Airbus who are *"working together to help the European Union shape this exciting agenda"*.

Mr **Axel Flaig**, Senior Vice President Research and Technology, Airbus, stressed that although the industry benefits from global recognition for its strong industrial performance, innovative technologies, and skilled teams, Europe faces increasing challenges and new challengers. *"We need to push ourselves, accelerate our pace of technological evolution, regulation and certification, and adapt to the clock speed of complementary technologies including batteries, electrification, and digital"* said Mr Flaig. The European Union's research funding is essential in this effort; *"it allows us to develop new and risky technologies and to align research across the European supply chain, which is crucial to ensure that these innovations actually fly onboard next generation aircraft"*.

Mr **Michel Eymard**, Senior Vice President Research and Developments, Safran, also supported the idea that the European aeronautics industry's success results from a research programs involving 3 pillars: aircraft, engines and equipments. Continuation of this support in the next Framework Programme is necessary to make our technologies more sustainable and competitive. *"Strong and fair cooperation between all the actors of the sector is needed to make the difference, it is only together that we can build the vision for the future of aviation"*.

Following a number of interesting interventions by among others MEPs Jean-Marian Marinescu, Jacqueline Foster, Clare Moody and Jakop Dalunde, Mrs Hohlmeier concluded by emphasizing the European Parliament's strong

commitment towards continuous investment and said that *“the future of sustainable aviation relies on research programmes”*.

About ASD

The AeroSpace and Defence Industries Association of Europe represents the Aeronautics, Space, Security and Defence industries in Europe. Based in Brussels, the organisation’s membership today comprises 16 major European aerospace and defence companies and 26 member associations in 19 countries (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK). These industries reach a turnover of 222 billion euro; invest 20 billion euro in R&D; employ 847,700 people; count over 3,000 companies, many of which are SMEs.