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WRC-15: Eutelsat Communications supports satellite industry ‘call for action’ to keep C-band spectrum for satellite services

Paris, 10 November 2015 – With the World Radiocommunication Conference in Geneva now underway, the satellite industry is more than mobilised to reaffirm the vital need to preserve C-band satellite spectrum for critical services to the global community. Eutelsat Communications (NYSE Euronext Paris: ETL) reaffirms its commitment to keeping this crucial spectrum allocated to the satellite community and its broad portfolio of users.

C-band satellite spectrum for the global community

Historically the first band to be deployed for satellite services, the C-band is indisputably recognised for its high reliability and resilience in extreme weather conditions. It represents a key factor of economic and social empowerment for communities, especially in equatorial zones in Africa, Asia and Central/Latin America.

The applications and services provided by C-band range from air traffic control to communications for security and police forces, border control, e-services (telemedicine, e-government services, remote education...), and government use, as well as interbanking exchanges and connectivity for the oil & gas industry. C-band also provides broadcasting and Internet services for communities around the world, making it critical for bridging the digital divide and is used for mobile backhaul by operators who need to extend penetration of mobile services to rural areas.

C-band spectrum is also critical for NGOs who provide immediate support to people in need in the event of a humanitarian crisis or natural disaster. When

all terrestrial connections are disrupted, satellite services in the C-band are vital for restoration of signals for urgent communications and to support humanitarian intervention.

The stakes at WRC-15 revolve around the request by the mobile industry to access C-band spectrum in order to respond to the global growth of mobile communications.

Satellite industry 'call for action' during WRC-15

The importance of preserving C-band for satellite services was acknowledged by stakeholders during a series of regional Conference Preparatory meetings held this summer in Asia, Africa, the Americas and in the RCC (Regional Commonwealth in the field of Communications). A key outcome was the necessity to take regional and local specificities into consideration and to safeguard against decisions taken by North America and Europe serving inappropriately as models for other regions.

The satellite industry, including Eutelsat, supports this position, and also highlights the multiple studies which have proven that sharing the C-band with the mobile industry is technically not feasible as introducing mobile signals within C-band spectrum effectively drowns satellite signals. What is presented by the mobile industry as shared use would in effect lead to the exclusion of satellite signals from C-band and the end of essential services and applications provided by satellite operators to communities.

Contrary to what is asserted, C-band services cannot be moved to higher satellite bands as they do not present the same physical characteristics and huge costs of equipment change for users would be required. The satellite industry and Eutelsat also point out that less than 50% of the spectrum already made available by the ITU for the mobile industry is already licenced and used by mobile operators.

This crucial debate is one of the most closely-watched items of the WRC-15 agenda, in Geneva that gathers governments, regulators, and actors from the satellite, mobile and broadcast industries.

The satellite industry has been relentlessly publishing information and data on the C-band to alert stakeholders to the risks of C-band spectrum sharing,

and to encourage solutions that consider the best interests of users.

For further information and documents:

- Satellite Spectrum Initiative:

<http://satellite-spectrum-initiative.com/files/Final%20design%20-%20C%20Band%5B1%5D.pdf>

<http://satellite-spectrum-initiative.com/files/C-band%20Protection%20White%20Paper%20FINAL.pdf>

- Global VSAT Forum:

<https://gvf.org/index.php/all-you-need-to-know-about-c-band-satcoms>

http://www.icontact-archive.com/YaDOh0pPV3BYaZ1ULmgul7qrd1fM_AVg?w=3

Africa's growth at the heart of the debate

Eutelsat Communications Chairman and CEO, Michel de Rosen, participated in discussions in Geneva last week, and reasserted Eutelsat's position, with a particular attention to the specific situation of C-band in Africa.

“Exchanging views with Abdoukarim Soumaila from the ATU (African Telecommunications Union) and Daniel Obam, President of the African Group, have confirmed that all African governments consider this issue as strategic for their future. C-band frequencies for satellite services are a vital asset for the growth and development of the African continent”, stated Michel de Rosen after his visit to WRC-15 in Geneva. His conclusion is clear: “What is logical for Europe would not be beneficial for Africa.”

Representatives from Eutelsat (Michel de Rosen 3rd left) with delegates of the African Group and the African Telecommunications Union.

Eutelsat Communications and the satellite industry will remain mobilised until the end of the World Radiocommunication Conference on 27 November when conclusions will be presented.

About Eutelsat Communications

Established in 1977, Eutelsat Communications (Euronext Paris: ETL, ISIN code: FR0010221234) is one of the world's leading and most experienced operators of communications satellites. The company provides capacity on 38 satellites to clients that include broadcasters and broadcasting associations, pay-TV operators, video, data and Internet service providers, enterprises and government agencies.

Eutelsat's satellites provide ubiquitous coverage of Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia-Pacific and the Americas, enabling video, data, broadband and government communications to be established irrespective of a user's location.

Headquartered in Paris, with offices and teleports around the globe, Eutelsat represents a workforce of 1,000 men and women from 37 countries who are experts in their fields and work with clients to deliver the highest quality of service.

For more about Eutelsat please visit www.eutelsat.com

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