

**Message from Joseph DAUL MEP,  
Chairman of the EPP-ED Group in the European Parliament  
Conference of the SME Union  
September 18, 2008**

**"Space: A New Business Opportunity for European SMEs"**

Dear Minister for Higher Education and Research, Mrs Péresse,  
Dear Commissioner for Energy and Transport, Mr Tajani,  
Dear Chairman of the EP Subcommittee on Security and Defence, Mr von Wogau,  
Dear President of the SME Circle, Mr Radwan,  
Dear President of SME Aerospace, Defence and Security, Mr Moulin,  
Dear panellists,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the Chairman of the EPP-ED Group in the European Parliament, it is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to this conference organised by the SME Union on "Space: a new Business Opportunity for European SMEs"

First, I would like to warmly thank the SME Union for taking the initiative of organising this conference of the utmost importance for European businesses.

The EPP-ED Group in the European Parliament is convinced that Europe cannot be a global player unless it has its own and independent access to space.

On that matter, significant progress has been made in the last decade in Europe through national programmes, cooperation between EU members, and European programmes. Thanks to this variety of programmes the European Union now truly has an independent space capacity at its disposal.

Through this development, we moved from the stage where space issues are dominated by the scientific and technical sector to the next step, which means that space has become a real market and a real opportunity for businesses.

European SMEs in particular rushed onto that new market very quickly, and with great success. The European Parliament was indeed aware early on of the opportunity this space market can represent for European businesses, which is why we strongly supported the Galileo project.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My Group is entirely aware of the huge opportunity that Space can represent, both for the European Union in playing a major role towards its partners and for the European economy.

I am convinced that the discussions you are going to have will be very fruitful

I would like to thank once again the SME Working Group on Aerospace and Defence for its dynamism and involvement on these questions. The SME Union actively contributes to link the European People's Party and the EPP-ED Group in the European Parliament, with concrete realities in the world of small and medium enterprises, and we are very grateful for this work.

I wish you a very good and fruitful conference.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'DAUL', written on a light-colored background.

Joseph DAUL