



**Seul le discours prononcé fait foi**

**Visite d'État  
S.A.R. le Grand-Duc au Japon  
du 27 au 29 novembre 2017**

**Discours du Vice-Premier ministre, ministre de l'Économie, Étienne Schneider,  
à la Luxembourg-Japan Space Conference  
le mercredi 29 novembre 2017**

Royal Highness,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning and welcome at the Konica Minolta Planetarium for our conference on the new developments and opportunities of the space sector. I would like to highlight the huge possibilities that lie in front of us; we could not have found a better location than this impressive dome, right next to Skytree – the world's highest free-standing broadcasting tower. It is always a pleasure to be here in Japan, and it is a particular honor to hold this conference in the framework of our official State Visit. Japan is an important economic partner for the Grand Duchy, but above all a friend with whom we regularly want to exchange in order to foster our close relationship.

As Luxembourg's Deputy Prime minister and Minister of the Economy, I am particularly honored that some important Japanese companies have chosen to implement in the Grand Duchy. I would like to mention Fanuc, the producer of industrial robots that provides services and spare parts to European subsidiaries from Luxembourg. The company is currently setting up a new 20.000 m<sup>2</sup> warehouse for product customization. Further, Carlex a subsidiary of Central Glass Japan, produces windshields in Luxembourg for the major car manufacturers of Europe. So among others, Japanese companies are active in two of the focus sectors of economic development chosen by the Luxembourg government: Logistics and Automotive components.

Space is another one of those priority sectors. This year we had the pleasure of welcoming the European Office of ispace in Luxembourg.

The CEO of ispace Japan, Takeshi Hakamada, is present today and will give a presentation later on. So you will have the opportunity to ask him personally what his company values about Luxembourg.

For us it is a great success to host the European headquarters and activities of this forward-looking and innovative Japanese company. I am particularly proud that ispace is at the forefront of collaboration with public research in Luxembourg. Ispace teamed up with the Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology, LIST, for the further development of the mass spectrometer that i-space will bring to the surface of the Moon to explore elemental compositions of the lunar ice. On the other side, the Interdisciplinary Center for Security, Reliability and Trust (SnT) as part of the Luxembourg University will develop a navigation system for the lunar exploration rover of ispace.

It is the first time that the Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR) has committed to fund space related projects contributing to the development of the SpaceResources.lu initiative. Both public research institutions, LIST and SnT, will each receive funding for their collaborative projects with ispace.

Next to ispace, 6 other space companies have established bases in Luxembourg since the launch of the SpaceResources.lu initiative in February last year. Our most recent announcement in this context is the implementation of the European headquarters of Spire, the US company specialized in nanosatellite constellations. According to the Forbes Magazine, Spire is among the top 25 young U.S. companies with a strong shot at reaching one day a valuation of 1 billion dollars or more.

The interest raised by our initiative and by the Luxembourg space sector is tremendous, in total 100 companies and organizations have announced their interest to collaborate with us in frame of the SpaceResources.lu initiative -be it for international partnerships or for an implementation in Luxembourg.

With the SpaceResources.lu initiative our aim is to offer an attractive overall framework for space resource activities, including but not limited to the legal regime. We have developed a series of measures to position Luxembourg as a European hub in new space activities and we offer dedicated support to start-ups and established companies that want to implement space related activities in Luxembourg.

When settling in Luxembourg, the companies, be it start-ups or established actors in space activities, fully integrate in our national space ecosystem.

As a front-runner in Europe, we adopted a law on the exploration and use of space resources in July. It brings key benefits to companies as well as to investors. Our law defines an authorization and a supervision procedure for any commercial space exploration missions, and it confers to companies the ownership of resources they extract in space. Luxembourg is thus the first European country, and the second worldwide after the US, to offer such a legal framework securing property rights for space resources. Further, Luxembourg's financial commitment of over 200 million dollars dedicated to the SpaceResources.lu initiative contributes to the development of our commercial space sector.

It allows us to provide early-stage funding to promising innovations. We are ready to invest in interesting space companies. In the case of Spire, the Grand Duchy becomes a shareholder via the "Luxembourg Future Fund". This investment fund aims to stimulate the diversification of the Luxembourg economy and to foster our strategic development sectors.

Companies registered in Luxembourg also have access to national R&D grants as well as to programs and funds of the European Space Agency, ESA. The Grand Duchy specially developed a range of programs to successfully foster close collaboration among national academic researchers and commercial companies, and ispace already seized this opportunity.

The next step we are going to take is the set-up of a dedicated Luxembourg Space Agency fully taking into account the needs of NewSpace companies. This will not be a copy of the business model of existing agencies elsewhere in the world. Our agency will be a public-private partnership between the Government, the private fund industry and venture capitalists. They will decide which companies we want to invest in and the Luxembourg Government is even willing to invest into the more risky part of these businesses.

Royal Highness,

Your support is key for the continued economic development of our country. Thank you for your presence and your speech today, this means a lot to all the participants, as well as to me.

It shows that the Grand-Ducal Court not only cares about the economic development of the country, but also supports our development efforts and is open to innovative and visionary ideas.

Thank you for opening doors to us and for your continued interest and support in the subject of space activities.

Royal Highness,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The SpaceResources.lu initiative is not Luxembourg's first venture in space. For more than 30 years now, my country has been at the forefront of commercial and co-operative developments to promote the use of space in ways that improve the quality of life on Earth.

SES is a fascinating success story, inherently linked to the constant development of the Grand Duchy.

Alongside the global satellite operator, Luxembourg boasts a very dynamic space sector with companies active all along the value chain. Overall, the space sector amounts to close to 2% of our annual GDP, clearly showing its importance. The Luxembourg Space sector has grown from nothing into probably the most dynamic in Europe, in just three decades.

We now leverage this dynamism, and the related competences, to position the Grand Duchy as the European leader and the preferred location for companies that want to develop NewSpace activities. Luxembourg is to become the European hub for the commercial utilization of space resources.

Luxembourg is a space nation at the heart of Europe. We are a first mover and want to take other space nations on board of our initiative.

In line with this, I am pleased to announce that later today we will sign a memorandum of collaboration with the Government of Japan on the exchange of information on exploration and commercial use of space resources. After the agreements signed with Portugal and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), this is another important step forward in enhancing international cooperation.

It is a strong recognition of our SpaceResources.lu initiative, especially as Japan and more precisely JAXA have a strong experience in space missions and have been initiators of the recognized Hayabusa mission.

I like Jaxa's slogan "Explore to realize" which fits very well with the ambitions of the Luxembourg SpaceResources initiative that aims to contribute to the peaceful exploration and sustainable utilization of Space Resources for the benefit of Humankind.

Our common approach and goals will surely open new collaboration opportunities.

The Conference of today involves space experts, explorers, entrepreneurs and advocates. This is the right mix for inspired and fruitful discussions and I am convinced that today's speakers and panelists will engage in an interesting exchange of ideas and expertise.

Thank you.