



## **Afghanistan signs strategic partnership with Eutelsat to accelerate access to satellite infrastructure for digital services**

**“Fast track to Digital Afghanistan” says ICT Minister, His Excellency Amirzai Sangin**

**Kabul, Paris, 29 January 2014** — Eutelsat Communications (NYSE Euronext Paris: ETL), one of the world's leading satellite operators, and the Afghanistan Ministry of Communications & Information Technology (MCIT) today announced they have signed an MOU giving Afghanistan satellite resources that will enhance deployment of its national broadcasting and telecommunications infrastructure as well as its international connectivity.

Under the multi-year agreement, Eutelsat will deploy an in-orbit satellite from February 2014 to 48° East to deliver full national coverage and extensive reach of Central Asia and the Middle East. The satellite will be officially called AFGHANSAT 1 by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, reflecting Afghanistan's entry into the commercial satellite business.

AFGHANSAT 1 will support a wide range of services including broadcasting, mobile telephony backhaul and IP connectivity. Eutelsat and the MCIT have also agreed on exploring opportunities for longer-term cooperation.

Commenting on the agreement, His Excellency Minister Sangin said: *“AFGHANSAT 1 is a new milestone in the development of the ICT sector in Afghanistan, which in the last 12 years has already seen mobile telephony coverage of 88% and penetration grow from zero to 75% through the licensing of six operators, ICT sector employment provided for more than 138,000 people and more than \$2.1 billion invested in the national economy. We are very happy to partner with Eutelsat on AFGHANSAT 1 which will provide access to ICT and broadcast services to Afghans, especially in unserved areas, and support our vision of transforming Afghanistan into an information society.”*

Speaking at the signing ceremony at the MCIT in Kabul, Michel de Rosen, Chairman and CEO of Eutelsat, said: *“This MOU represents the fastest and most effective route to accessing infrastructure configured to deliver full coverage of Afghanistan and surrounding regions. It enables Afghanistan to scale up capacity as and when needed and to offer broadcasters, telcos and ISPs the immediate benefit of resources providing exceptional reach and performance. We are honoured to be Afghanistan's chosen partner for this important initiative.”*

## About the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was established in 1955 with the objective of bringing Afghanistan into the information society while preserving the country's cultural heritage. Since 2003, MCIT has embarked on and executed a policy of sector wide liberalization and licensing and been responsible for the creation of a framework, in accordance with its mandate under the Telecommunications Services Regulation Act of Afghanistan, that is a benchmark for ensuring the delivery of affordable and world class telecommunications services in emerging markets through effective partnerships with the private sector, and foreign and domestic telecommunications sector investors and operators. MCIT's mission is to create and further develop and implement a solid and transparent framework that will ensure the effective and efficient development of the telecommunications sector and transition to the information society in Afghanistan. For more about MCIT please visit [www.mcit.gov.af](http://www.mcit.gov.af)

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## 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 34 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 32 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](http://www.eutelsat.com)

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