



International Space Summit, Paris Calls on Allies: €20 Billion for Strategic Space Autonomy

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The [Paris International Space Summit](#) marked a watershed moment for the Old Continent. Driven by strong pressure from French President Emmanuel Macron, European countries decided to close ranks to build strategic and military autonomy in space, reducing the dangerous dependence on external actors such as the United States and Elon Musk's Starlink constellation.

A Heated Geopolitical Context

The proceedings opened with an outburst from Finnish President Alexander Stubb, who made a public appeal to Elon Musk to allow Ukraine to use Starlink to defend itself against deadly Russian missile attacks. Musk's absence and the low diplomatic profile chosen by the White House — which sent only a delegation led by a former member of the National Security Council — laid bare growing transatlantic tensions.

Faced with American disengagement, the summit saw planetary participation with over 90 heads of state, ministers, and delegations from around the world. From the Paris stage, Emmanuel Macron thundered against global financial imbalances:

"Which great power today reserves its public funds for others rather than itself? Which European companies have been able to benefit from an American or Chinese public market and public financing? [...] Would we really be the only ones to put our taxpayers' money on the table to finance projects that don't first and foremost respond to the needs of our operators?"



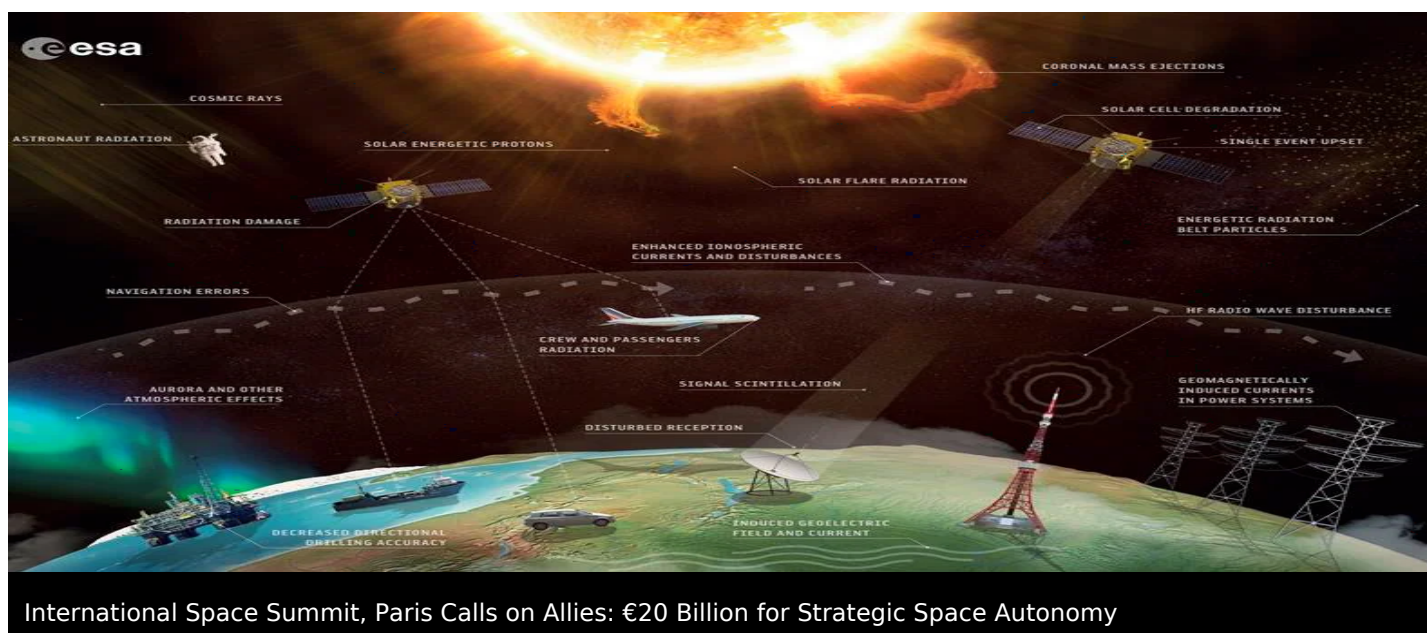
A Record Wave of Contracts: €20 Billion

If politics set the tone, industry responded with action. On the very first day of the summit, **51 contracts and agreements were signed for a total value of approximately €20 billion.**

The heart of this massive space initiative rests on well-defined pillars:

- **The IRIS² program:** The European grant of €15.7 billion sees Eutelsat and the SpaceRise consortium in the lead. Airbus's *defence & space* division will build 66 military satellites in the LEO segment by 2029 (in collaboration with Thales Alenia Space), while Belgian Aerospacelab won a €2.4 billion contract for 264 satellites.
- **OneWeb Enhancement:** Airbus received an additional order from the French operator for 229 additional civil and military satellites, bringing the total fleet to over 600 satellites.

- **Defense and Intelligence:** The Hôtel de Brienne launched the assignment of the *Celeste* contract (successor to the *Ceres* intelligence constellation) to Airbus and the start-up *Unseenlabs* for less than €400 million, accompanied by the *Jewel* missile early warning program.
- **New Launch Vehicles:** Arianespace secured a full order book with about ten additional Ariane 6 launches, while ArianeGroup subsidiary *MaiaSpace* closed a multi-launch contract with Japanese iQPS for the future reusable *Maia* launch vehicle, expected to debut in mid-2027.



Birth of the First European Space Defense Forum

Paris also hosted the first **European Space Defense Forum**, a summit that brought together 130 senior military commanders and political leaders from over 30 countries. The goal is to chart a doctrine of strictly autonomous security — centered on a defensive approach and operational decisions independent of Washington's leadership — opposing the American push for tight integration within the "Five Eyes" ranks and instead pursuing a model of pure interoperability (CSpo initiative).

Europe has decided to turn the page: space is no longer merely a commercial field, but the new and essential bulwark of continental sovereignty and defense.