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## **12TH EUMETSAT African Forum to explore the future use of satellite data in Africa**

**Kigali 13 September** – Today, the 12<sup>th</sup> session of EUMETSAT’s biennial User Forum in Africa opened its doors in Kigali (Rwanda), to continue the well-established dialogue between EUMETSAT and the African user communities. The forum, organised in collaboration with the Rwanda Meteorology Agency, will last until 16 September and address the future of satellite data usage in Africa.

In particular, delegates will consider how to prepare for the transition to the Meteosat Third Generation and the start of Meteosat-8 operations over the Indian Ocean region, which is expected to improve cyclone predictions in the area, by furnishing users with a wider suite of products than currently provided by Meteosat-7.

The agenda includes discussions on the upgrade of the PUMA reception stations as part of the MESA (Monitoring of Environment and Security in Africa) programme which is a component of the joint Africa-EU strategy. Particular attention will be given to the use of satellite data for monitoring climate change and improving disaster resilience in Africa.

Alain Ratier, Director-General of EUMETSAT said: “Data from EUMETSAT’s geostationary Meteosats are vital to support nowcasting and very short-range forecasting of high-impact weather, which is particularly important for Africa. With more than 30 years of consistent data, they also are an asset for the understanding of climate change. Ensuring the long-term continuity of these data services for Africa and easy access by the users is essential. It requires that EUMETSAT and its user community in Africa work hand in hand to prepare for a smooth transition towards the new generation of satellites, notably Meteosat Third Generation.”

Quote from Ministry, “The free access to satellite data provided by EUMETSAT allows our country to better monitor the weather, the climate and the environment. It complements our own investments in these critical areas and facilitates the successful implementation of the National Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy programmes.”

The meeting will bring together some 160 participants from 57 countries representing National Meteorological and Hydrological Services from Africa and Europe, African regional institutional bodies, government agencies and regional scientific and technical institutions.

### **About EUMETSAT**

The European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites is an intergovernmental organisation based in Darmstadt, Germany, currently with 30 Member States (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom) and one Cooperating State (Serbia).

EUMETSAT operates the geostationary satellites Meteosat -9, -10 and -11 over Europe and Africa, and Meteosat-7 over the Indian Ocean. Since 4 July 2016, Meteosat-8 is being relocated over the Indian Ocean where it will continue to be exploited from 2017 at 41.5°E.

EUMETSAT operates two Metop polar-orbiting satellites as part of the Initial Joint Polar System (IJPS) shared with the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

EUMETSAT is also a partner in the cooperative high precision ocean altimetry Jason missions involving Europe and the United States (Jason-2, Jason-3 and Jason-CS/Sentinel-6).

The data and products from EUMETSAT's satellites are vital to weather forecasting and make a significant contribution to the monitoring of environment and climate change.

The European Union has entrusted EUMETSAT with exploiting the four Sentinel missions of the Copernicus space component dedicated to the monitoring of atmosphere, ocean and climate on its behalf. EUMETSAT will carry out these tasks in cooperation with ESA.

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