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### **ERG Statement on Digital dividend: a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Europe**

The digital dividend represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Europe's innovation and growth. The European Regulators Group (ERG) expresses its strong support today for a series of initiatives to ensure the EU makes the best of the digital dividend, the spectrum frequencies made available by the switch from analogue to digital broadcasting.

The ERG particularly welcomes the draft opinion approved mid-May by the RSPG (Radio Spectrum Policy Group) for public consultation, as a milestone in the debate on the digital dividend. In its recommendations, to feed into the European Commission's forthcoming initiative on the digital dividend, the RSPG calls for an EU-wide coordinated non-mandatory approach and urge the Commission to act swiftly. The RSPG also identifies the so-called 800 MHz band for networks and services other than broadcast transmission, recognising that Member States may maintain broadcasting use in all or a portion of the band.

Dániel Pataki, Chairman of the RSPG, explained: *"If we are serious about seizing this golden opportunity not only for the EU telecoms sector or European consumers, but the EU's economy as a whole, we must act now."* Matthias Kurth, Chairman of the ERG, welcomes the report: *"I am convinced the great work done by my counterparts at the RSPG will help the EU and Member States to make the best decisions on the use of the digital dividend. The ERG reassures our colleagues in the RSPG of its full support in their work on the digital dividend". "The ERG's support is very important for us: it shows all European regulators are on the same line and are committed to defending what's best for the EU."* Pataki continued.

The ERG is of the opinion that Member States should make concrete planning to reserve as soon as possible this sub-band on technology and service neutral basis. This will constitute a first decisive step towards a harmonised use of these valuable frequencies, recognising that different time scales may be used according to national circumstances.

Following the European Parliament resolution of September 2008, and the Council Conclusions of June 2008, the ERG welcomes the initiative from the European Commission.

The work carried out by the CEPT (the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations) should lead to the implementation of harmonised technical elements in the sub-band 790-862 MHz. The ERG believes that such a step forward would constitute a strong signal for the industry that needs more certainty before investing in the development of the next decade's terminals.