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In a bold initiative, Boeing Launch Services, Arianespace S.A., and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd. (MHI) announced today the signing of an agreement to provide a powerful new commercial service offering that combines the strength of three leading launch service providers to ensure on-time launches for customers around the world.

In a striking similarity to the commercial airline industry where passengers buy one ticket that connects the flight schedules of several partner airlines, the new launch services alliance makes mission assurance a reality by offering commercial customers the ability to fly on three of the world's finest launch systems. Under this agreement, Arianespace, Boeing Launch Services and MHI will create a unique service offering that allows customers to seamlessly transition among launch platforms for maximum flexibility to ensure on-time delivery to orbit. This tri-party alliance also preserves each launch provider's ability to individually market and promote its own unique platforms and capabilities to customers.

"In a competitive global market for launch services you need to provide customers with focused solutions that meet their needs," said Will Trafton, President of Boeing Launch Services and Vice President and General Manager, Expendable Launch Systems for Boeing. "We believe that the best way to enhance service and optimize customer satisfaction is to offer the capabilities of three respected launch systems to achieve maximum flexibility and mission assurance."

Boeing Launch Services will offer Sea Launch, a launcher of heavy-class commercial satellites with a mass up to 6,000 kg to GTO.

"We are providing unparalleled access to space in order to meet our customers' rapidly changing needs," said Jean-Yves Le Gall, Chief Executive Officer of Arianespace. "Together we are reinventing and redefining launch services for the 21st Century."

"Mitsubishi Heavy Industries has extensive experience in cooperative alliances with leading companies from around the world," elaborated Junichi Maezawa, Managing Director and General Manager of MHI Aerospace Headquarters. "We are confident that this creative arrangement will further enhance our customers' satisfaction."

While the benefits of this commercial launch service alliance will be available to all current and future satellite customers, each launch services provider will remain autonomous. Customers will remain the final decision makers while they gain access to a much broader set of solutions than would otherwise be available in today's market.

Arianespace Arianespace S.A. is the leading global commercial launch services provider serving primarily commercial satellites launched to geostationary transfer orbit (GTO). Created in 1980 as the world's first commercial space transportation company, Arianespace has signed contracts for the launch of more than 250 satellite payloads. For more information, see the Arianespace website.

Boeing Launch Services Inc., headquartered in Huntington Beach, Calif., is responsible for the marketing and sales of the Sea Launch and Delta family of launch vehicles to commercial and government customers. BLS is part of Boeing's Integrated Defense Systems, which is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses.

Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. is Japan's leading aerospace company with responsibility for the manufacture, sale and launch of the highly successful H-IIA launch vehicle. For more information, see the Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. website.

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