Mr. Director General,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be addressing this high level audience today and share with them my thoughts on this very important issue, the Single European Sky implementation. Therefore, I want to thank the Director General of EDA, Ambassador Domecq for giving me this opportunity.

In June 2016, in the foreword of the EU Global Strategy, the High Representative of the Union, Ms Federica Mogherini, stated that “the idea that Europe is an exclusively “civilian power” does not do justice to an evolving reality.” The military instrument of the European Union has to be harmonically developed together with all the other civilian instruments it possesses.

My aim today is to raise your awareness about these issues and develop a common understanding on how to together explore the opportunities and tackle the challenges associated with these new technologies in both our Foreign and Security policies and our military capacity.

In this context and in line with the strategic priorities set in the Global Strategy, Military Aviation and Air Mobility are and will be essential to ensure Security and Defence in Europe. The Military aviation is facing a challenge which is twofold: operate in a more and more complex security environment while also adapting to the change of paradigm in the Air Traffic Management (ATM) and the Aviation environment notably through digitalisation,
automation, connectivity and Artificial Intelligence among the other new technologies.

Civil and Military Aviation activities are tightly interlinked, as they share the same airspace considered as a continuum. Consequently, the modernization of the Aviation sector and of the ATM environment needs to be properly framed, to match with the military, who in the European context are at the same time Airspace User, Air Navigation Service Provider, Airport Operator, Airspace Manager and Regulator.

The right instruments have been put into place, to enhance the civil-military collaboration in ATM and more broadly in the Aviation domain, notably by sharing best practices and addressing challenges related to digitalization, security, flexible use of airspace and Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) integration in non-segregated airspace. This should be preserved and further enhanced.

Future aviation which will be part of a new intelligent transport system relying on greater digitalization and automation will have ensure that military aviation will continue to provide and further improve, effective security and defence in Europe in this changing context.

Improving military mobility in the European Union is one of the practical steps to that end, hence contributing to building a Union that protects, where European solidarity and mutual assistance are implemented effectively. To this end, twenty-five EU Member-States have decided to include military mobility among the more binding commitments they have taken under the Permanent Structured Cooperation launched on 11 December 2017. A better mobility of forces within and beyond the EU will enhance European security by enabling the EU Member-States to act faster, in line with their defence needs and responsibilities, both in the context of Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations, as well as national and multinational activities, including in the framework of NATO. The flexible and responsive nature of airpower is unique and must be kept available for decision makers when considering political and diplomatic responses to crisis situations. The Air operations conducted from Europe over Libya and more recently over Syria
have demonstrated the relevance of this Military Mobility project in the Air domain.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the new era we are living, new kind of challenges have emerged, ones that are in a digital form. A “Digital Single European Sky” could generate significant changes in the fields of connectivity and data sharing, automation for manned and unmanned aviation, virtualisation and CNS infrastructure rationalization that could lead to opportunities such as rationalization, increased capacity, costs saving and more efficient information exchanges. However, these changes would also raise some challenges linked to security, including cyber security, spectrum congestion and premature obsolescence. It’s essential to keep in mind that an increased access to technology increases the dangerousness of potential threats. The necessary information shall also be shared by the competent authorities across the Air Traffic Management (ATM) network. Moreover, future conflicts may increasingly include cyber wars, with disruption of information and communications.

Consequently, a resilient and robust data sharing network, including relevant cyber protection and cyber resilience will be essential. This is the reason why it remains essential to ensure a strong collaboration with the military in the whole aviation modernisation process, from the definition phase to the deployment. Moreover, the military should also benefit from the digitalization and the modernisation of the aviation system through increased interoperability and civil-military synergies, cost savings and enhanced military mission effectiveness. This would for instance require gaining access to big data which could improve the Recognized Air Picture and the related decision-making processes.

Interoperability, synergies and dual-use solutions will be further developed by using all EU-funding opportunities. In this context, the European Defence Action Plan and in particular the European Defence Fund show Europe’s commitment to take bold action in support of the Member-States. The Aviation sector, notably Single European Sky, is an outstanding example which emphasizes the interactions between defence policies and some
European economic policies. To this end, incentives, measures and all EU funding opportunities should be used to the maximum extent possible. In particular, the European Defence Fund could provide additional opportunities for the military in respect to SES and SESAR as funding from the EDF will be tailored to the military. However, a fundamental principle of the Defence Fund is that it is about funding “collaborative” projects. Member-States will be able to benefit from funding when they collaborate together.

I would like to insist on interoperability and synergies which are key words in the context of tomorrow’s Air Traffic Management and aviation systems. Regarding interoperability, the Military Aviation Strategy states that the military will be as compliant as possible but will need specific arrangements when deemed necessary as it is equally important to ensure that military-to-military interoperability is maintained to enable the effective contribution to operations in multinational coalitions. I also recall that the regulation on the interoperability of the European Air Traffic Management Network highlights that civil and military systems have to be interoperable with the aim to ensure the timely sharing of information covering all phases of flight between civil and military parties. Consequently, I would say that interoperability is not an option but it’s a must.

To this end, fostering civil–military cooperation is necessary to ensure the fulfilment of the mission mandate in a complex environment and to ensure efficient information sharing with civilian actors. Dual-use facilities, dual use solutions with regards to Communications, Navigation, Surveillance, RPAS Air Traffic Integration for and common services would contribute to ensuring the safety, regularity and efficiency of the global aviation system and compliance with the requirements of military air operations. This could be reached by promoting a common understanding of key principles, sharing best practices and monitoring their practical implementation.

However, in order to improve interoperability and to develop dual solutions, some improvement could be done both on the military and on the civil side.

On the military side, the digitalisation world is innovating faster than the defence sector. There are many reasons for this, including our procurement
and financial processes, budgetary constraints, but more importantly increased responsibility due to defence and security missions that leads to different risk management. The digital world increased considerably the momentum and the military aviation sector should evolve accordingly.

We must also consider how we could ensure the coherence of all national initiatives because technological developments are happening at different speeds within the Military Aviation Community, presenting an additional challenge for our interoperability. This underlines the urgency of sharing initiatives developed by the Member-States to maintain the highest level of interoperability in the future.

Solutions and processes could be defined and developed in order to facilitate collaborative and multi-stakeholder’s projects. Such projects should be further encouraged by incentives measures and to this end, all EU funding opportunities should be exploited to the maximum extent possible. There is also a need to involve the different Military expert communities on this topic.

On the civil side, it seems essential to further improve the consistency of SESAR lifecycle. To this end, it could be useful to further develop an architecture to support the execution of the desired end State. Finally the existing financial tool could be better adapted, notably to take into account the Military specificities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Wrapping up, the key points of my presentation are as follows:

- The current strategic context concomitant with the digital revolution we are experiencing, raises important challenges for both civil and military aviation.

- This is a pivotal period for the Military Aviation which must exploit the upcoming opportunities offered by this digital revolution while ensuring and further improving effective security and defence in Europe.

- Among these opportunities, working closely with the civil aviation stakeholders will allow us to remain innovative and by moving
forward together to bring the transformation of our military air capability into the tempo of the 21st century.

- This is essential, because even though our objectives are different we are sharing the same airspace and we are therefore subject to the same upheavals.

- However, we must never lose sight of the operational purpose that must guide Military aviation developments.

- To this end, the existing instruments put in place by EDA in support of its Member States and aiming to enhance the civil-military collaboration in ATM and more broadly in the Aviation domain, should be preserved and further enhanced.

- I would conclude that innovation is not the idea, but the implementation of the idea. The military, and I am sure EDA, are ready to go.