

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**BETWEEN**  
**THE GOVERNMENT OF ICELAND**  
**AND**  
**THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND**  
**NORTHERN IRELAND**  
**ON**  
**COOPERATION ON EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION, AND SPACE**

The Government of Iceland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (“**Her Majesty’s Government**”) (“**the Participants**”),

- ***Recalling*** the discussions which have taken place between the Participants on such cooperation;
- ***Recognising*** the long-standing shared values and interests of the Participants, and their commitment to strengthening the bilateral relationship in the coming decade;
- ***Noting*** the “Joint Vision for 2030 – Enhancing Cooperation between Iceland and the United Kingdom”, signed on 14 May 2020;
- ***Taking into account*** that the Participants have, and will continue to, put arrangements in place to safeguard the future relationship following the United Kingdom’s departure from the European Economic Area (EEA);
- ***Acknowledging*** the importance of international cooperation in education and creating opportunities for academic exchange including student mobility in order to reinforce cross cultural awareness and bolster ties even further;
- ***Recognising*** that international cooperation in education, research and innovation will strengthen the bonds of friendship and understanding between their people and will facilitate and enhance their economic and commercial relationship;
- ***Recalling*** the obligations incumbent upon the Participants as enshrined in the objectives of the United Nations space treaties<sup>1</sup>;
- ***Noting*** the adoption by Her Majesty’s Government of the Space Industry Act 2018 which establishes a legal framework for the regulation of spaceflight activities in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the current Icelandic Environment Legislation, in particular Act No. 33/2004 on marine and coastal antipollution measures;
- ***Desiring*** to take advantage, for mutual benefit, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland’s development of its space programme, offering the opportunity for a new, modern dimension in the relationship as regards cooperation on international issues regarding space.

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<sup>1</sup> UN Space Treaties include:

- The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (1967),
- The Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (1968),
- The Convention on International Liability for Damage caused by Space Objects (1972),
- The Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (1975).

## **HAVE REACHED THE FOLLOWING UNDERSTANDINGS:**

### **Paragraph 1**

#### **Cooperation in Higher Education, Research, and Innovation**

1. The Participants recognise and value the role of education, research, and innovation cooperation in building a strong bilateral relationship and will encourage further cooperation in these fields, including through R&D programmes such as Horizon Europe. To this end, the Participants will actively engage in exchanges of experience, information, ideas and policy approaches for example in relevant bilateral, regional and international meetings as well as promoting exchange by respective businesses, higher education institutions and research entities.
2. Cooperation between the Participants is to be further enhanced through the Chevening Scholarship Scheme, the United Kingdom government's global scholarship programme. The Participants will jointly provide additional funding to the scheme, which will enable Icelandic students to undertake fully funded masters' level degree courses in the United Kingdom.
3. To further promote student mobility, a new joint scholarship fund will be established to support students from Iceland wishing to study or train in the United Kingdom, strengthen the Participant's science and research community, and provide the foundation for further bilateral research collaboration. Funding will be provided by the United Kingdom for partially funded scholarships and internships from 2022 onwards, in partnership with Iceland, who will provide administrative support. Scholarships will be open to all academic disciplines and may, where relevant, be linked to the United Kingdom's space sector internship programme (SPIN) to provide further practical experience and benefits to students, companies and the space ecosystem of the United Kingdom. The precise nature of this fund will be defined separately, including management of visa requirements which the student will need to meet. Contributions will be reviewed annually and in line with the duration of this MoU.
4. A yearly Iceland-UK Higher Education and Research Forum will highlight existing exchange and research co-operation, explore areas of future opportunities, and bring together interested higher education institutions, research organisations, agencies, innovators and programme organisations in order to encourage collaborative and innovative models and arrangements for exchange and funding in particular based on Horizon Europe, the Turing scheme, and the Erasmus+ programme. We will encourage exchanges on an institutional bilateral basis, including those that operate on the principles of fee waivers and credit recognition and those that create opportunities for education-related internships.

### **Paragraph 2**

#### **Cooperation in Space Related Activities**

1. To facilitate the development of space science and the commercial spaceflight market, Her Majesty's Government may authorise spaceflight activities which may affect the territory of Iceland on the understandings set out in this MoU. For the purposes of this MoU, "the territory of Iceland" includes the territorial waters, the Exclusive Economic Zone and the airspace of Iceland.
2. Within the context of launches of spacecraft from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Her Majesty's Government will offer support as appropriate for Iceland's own space-related interests in education, research and innovation, including the development and use of satellite applications.

3. As regards spaceflight activities under paragraph (2) this MoU will be accompanied by mutually acceptable operational procedures set forth in writing by the Participants (Annex). These operational procedures will address i.a.:
  - a) demarcation of the estimated drop zones;
  - b) environmental protection including ensuring that all reasonable efforts are made by commercial operators to avoid debris falling within the territory of Iceland or, in the event that debris were to fall within the territory of Iceland, that all reasonable efforts are made by commercial operators to recover such debris;
  - c) details of notices issued or to be issued to fishing and merchant vessels in the territory of Iceland; and
  - d) details of Notices to Airmen (NOTAM) issued or to be issued to aircraft flying to or from, or transiting across, the territory of Iceland, informing the recipients of the potential effects of spacecraft launch; or sufficient detail to enable the Government of Iceland to issue such notices.

### **Paragraph 3**

#### **Review and Amendment**

1. The Participants will review this MoU on an annual basis.
2. This MoU may be amended at any time by the mutual written consent of the Participants.

### **Paragraph 4**

#### **Commencement, Duration and Termination**

1. This MoU will come into effect on the last date of its signature by the Participants and will remain in effect for a period of five (5) years.
2. The Participants may decide to extend the duration of this MoU by arrangement in writing.
3. Either participant may terminate this MoU by giving the other Participant at least twelve (12) months' written notice of termination.
4. The termination of this MoU will not affect the ongoing cooperation activities unless otherwise decided by the Participants.

### **Paragraph 5**

#### **Disputes**

1. Any differences relating to the interpretation or implementation of this MoU will be settled amicably through consultations between the Participants without reference to any third party.

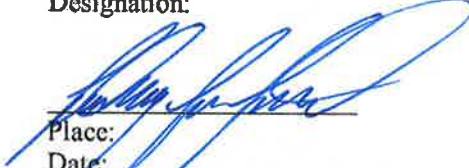
The foregoing represents the understandings reached between the Participants on the matters referred to in this MoU.

Signed in duplicate at a virtual meeting on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July in the English and Icelandic languages, both texts having equal validity. In case of any divergence of interpretation of this MoU, the English text will prevail.

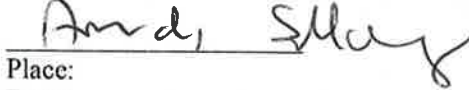
**For the Government of Iceland**

**For the Government of United  
Kingdom of Great Britain and  
Northern Ireland**

Signed:  
Designation:

  
Place:  
Date:

Signed:  
Designation:

  
Place:  
Date:

## ANNEX

### Operational Procedures Concerning Spaceflight Activities Which May Affect the Territory of Iceland

#### Paragraph 1

1. These Operational Procedures ("the Procedures") supplement the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Iceland ("the Participants") and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland ("Her Majesty's Government"), on Cooperation on Education, Research and Innovation, and Space ("the MoU").

2. The Procedures are based on Paragraph 2(3) of the MoU. They outline the mutually accepted administrative processes to be followed as regards spaceflight activities which may affect the territory of Iceland.

3. For the purposes of the MoU and the Procedures, "the territory of Iceland" includes the territorial waters, the Exclusive Economic Zone and the airspace of Iceland. A demarcation of the estimated drop zones expected to fall within this territory will be specified in a map attached to each individual application.

4. While implementing the Procedures the Participants will take due note of their existing commitments to the objectives of the following United Nations treaties ("UN Space Treaties"):

- The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (1967),
- The Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (1968),
- The Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects (1972),
- The Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (1975).

5. Spaceflight activities that fall under the purview of the MoU and the Procedures, will be based on the Space Industry Act 2018 which establishes a legal framework for the regulation of spaceflight activities in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and i.a. the current Icelandic Environment Legislation as regards the territory of Iceland, in particular Act No. 33/2004 on marine and coastal antipollution measures.

#### Paragraph 2

1. In accordance with Paragraph 2(1) of the MoU, Her Majesty's Government may authorise spaceflight activities which may affect the territory of Iceland.

2. In order for such activities to be carried out, a permit for the use of Icelandic airspace by spacecrafts which may affect the territory of Iceland must first be issued by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland ("the MFA") or other competent Icelandic authorities. Spaceflight activities which may affect the Reykjavik flight information region, outside the territory of Iceland, shall be notified to the Icelandic authorities to allow the proper issuing of a NOTAM as required.

3. Applications for a permit shall be submitted to the Icelandic authorities through diplomatic channels, or other mutually approved channels, in a timely manner and usually not less than four months in advance of the start date of the project.

4. Applications for a permit can be made for individual launches or a series of launches.

5. Applications for a permit will be accompanied by particulars concerning:

- a) details of notices issued or to be issued to fishing and merchant vessels in the territory of Iceland, and
- b) sufficient detail to enable the Icelandic authorities to issue Notices to Airmen (NOTAM) for aircraft flying to or from, or transiting across, the territory of Iceland, informing the recipients of the potential effects of spacecraft launch,
- c) information on possible debris that might fall within the territory of Iceland, including estimates on the volume and nature of the debris and the likelihood of polluting, toxic or hazardous substances landing within the territory of Iceland,
- d) as detailed information as possible on any expected drop zones within the territory of Iceland,

e) information on how all reasonable efforts will be made to avoid debris falling within the territory of Iceland or, in the event that debris were to fall within the territory of Iceland, how all reasonable efforts will be made to recover such debris, any other information on the environmental impact of the launches deemed relevant and requested by the Icelandic authorities.

### **Paragraph 3**

1. Efforts will be made by the Icelandic authorities for the prompt issuing of permits after a review ensuring that proper safety, security and environmental protection measures have been complied with in line with Icelandic legislation and international obligations.

2. The issuing of permits will be dependent on sufficient information being received in line with Paragraph 2(5) of the Procedures.

3. The Icelandic authorities may grant permits for individual launches or a series of launches which may affect the territory of Iceland. If a permit is granted for a series of launches, a notification shall be sent to the Icelandic authorities in advance of each individual launch within the series containing all relevant information to enable the Icelandic authorities to verify that the launch in question falls within the parameters of the permit.

4. Permits for use of Icelandic airspace by spacecrafts which may affect the territory of Iceland may be denied or revoked for an individual launch or series of launches if the Icelandic authorities consider that conditions for previous launches have not been met or if it becomes apparent that the launch or series of launches is likely to cause harm or to be inconsistent with Icelandic laws.

5. Where the Icelandic authorities are minded to deny the issuing of a permit or to revoke an existing permit, the MFA will consult with Her Majesty's Government as soon as possible, with the view of reaching a mutually acceptable outcome.

### **Paragraph 4**

These Operational Procedures will come into effect on the same date as the MoU and continue in effect for the duration of the MoU as set out in Paragraph 4 of the MoU.