

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

The President today announced that the Administration will allow for the expansion of the sale of images taken from space and the export of the systems themselves. This decision is expected to expand American jobs and business opportunities by enabling U S firms to compete aggressively in the growing international market for remote sensing, which already accounts for nearly \$400 million worldwide and is expected to grow to more than \$2 billion by the turn of the century.

Under the policy, U S companies will be licensed by the Secretary of Commerce to operate private remote sensing systems and sell those images to domestic and foreign entities. The export of turn-key remote sensing systems will also be considered under this policy on a case-by-case basis under an export license issued by the State Department. National security and international obligations will be protected through specific licensing conditions. Export of sensitive technologies will be considered on a restricted basis.

Vice President Gore also highlighted the decision's importance to maintaining the competitiveness of America's aerospace industry. "Removing some of our barriers to the sale of space-based remote sensing systems and data products is a major contribution to the ability of U S industry, which sets the world standard for these systems, to compete successfully in this rapidly emerging global commercial market," he said.

Equally important, the Vice President said, is the contribution which data from such satellites will make to our knowledge of the planet. "Timely, high quality data which we expect to become available from these systems will include global change and environmental information which will form a vital part of this country's National Information Infrastructure."

Space-based images and imaging systems are increasingly being recognized by commercial entities as a means of dramatically improving their productivity and business operations. Farmers, city planners, environmentalists, news organizations, map makers, surveyors, geologists, mining companies, oil companies, timber harvesters, taxing authorities, as well as foreign governments have all recognized the utility of high quality space-based images for purely commercial purposes.

This new policy should also aid the U S defense industry in its efforts to find new commercial applications for defense technologies and enhance U S global competitiveness in the international remote sensing market. Including the market for images incorporating demographic or technical data with digital maps, or geographic information systems, the market for space-based imagery could be up to \$15 billion by the year 2000.