UAE Space Agency Selects EDGE as Strategic Partner for Sirb



- First space capability-building programme to be implemented by a local industrial consortium led by the private sector
- Consortium comprises major players in the UAE's private space sector including Yahsat, Bayanat, and the National Space Science and Technology Centre (NSSTC)

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates – 20 November, 2023: The UAE Space Agency and EDGE, one of the world's leading advanced technology and defence groups, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to implement the Sirb programme, a constellation of three synthetic aperture radar (SAR) satellites, which aims to launch the first satellite, Sirb-1, by 2026. This aligns with the UAE government's directions to create opportunities for national companies, including start-ups and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), in the private sector.

Under the guidance of the UAE Space Agency, EDGE has announced the formation of a local consortium of key players in the UAE's private space sector and national centres, fulfilling one of the primary objectives of its strategic partnership with the UAE Space Agency. Marking EDGE's first venture into the space domain, this announcement aligns with the nation's ambitions to locally manufacture space technologies and foster national research and development, engineering, and scientific expertise in the space sector.

EDGE assumes the role of prime contractor with an added focus on Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) payload development. Yahsat and Bayanat will implement the management of satellites, operations, data and space applications, while NSSTC will contribute by providing assembly, integration, and testing (AIT) operations. The consortium will continue to expand its collaboration with other industry players, SMEs, and start-ups to further enhance the collective expertise and capabilities of the programme.

This announcement comes on the heels of His Highness Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Chairman of Abu Dhabi Executive Council, and H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of Dubai Executive Council, launching the development phase of the Sirb programme.

His Excellency Salem Butti Al Qubaisi, Director-General of UAE Space Agency, said: “Our partnership with EDGE is a strategic step in growing the UAE’s private space sector. The establishment of this local consortium is a cornerstone in our mission to implement the Sirb programme and foster a competitive and innovative commercial space sector. Through strategic collaborations with the UAE’s major private space players and national centres, we are promoting the growth of a knowledge-based economy and ensuring that the UAE's talent and expertise is central to our regional and global leadership in the space domain.”

Mansour Al Mulla, Managing Director & CEO of EDGE Group, said: "At EDGE, our sights are set on enhancing our capabilities and playing a transformative role in the national and global space sector. The signing of this MoU is an important first step and lays the foundation for strategic investments and partnerships which will accelerate the ‘Sirb’ programme. By uniting the foremost local players in the sector, we are fostering national research and development (R&D) and driving the nation’s ambitions for a competitive space ecosystem.”