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5G-ACIA and 6G Smart Networks and Services Industry Association (6G-IA) Sign Memorandum of Understanding to Strengthen Cooperation on Industrial Connectivity

Frankfurt / Brussels – The 5G Alliance for Connected Industries and Automation (5G-ACIA) and the 6G Smart Networks and Services Industry Association (6G-IA) have recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to foster closer cooperation between the industrial and telecommunications ecosystems, with a focus on the evolution from 5G towards 6G and its impact on smart manufacturing and process automation, at a time when industrial adoption of private 5G networks is accelerating and 6G development is gaining momentum.

The MoU establishes a framework for collaboration between the two organizations, aiming to align industrial requirements with the development of next-generation mobile communication technologies. By strengthening dialogue between industry, research, and the telecommunications community, 5G-ACIA and 6G-IA seek to ensure that future networks effectively support the needs of connected industries.

Building on a shared history of cooperation, this renewed partnership follows the success of two joint webinars held in 2025 on “*Update on recent 5G/6G achievements*” and “*Highlights, Lessons Learnt and Next Steps on ISAC/JCAS*”. These events sparked insightful discussions and received excellent feedback from the community, confirming strong interest from industrial users and researchers in early alignment on topics such as ISAC/JCAS, spectrum evolution, and system architecture considerations for 6G.

“6G-IA leads the EU’s research and trial activities on 6G and beyond. From the 5G-ACIA perspective, close collaboration is essential to ensure that industry requirements and concerns — particularly those of manufacturing and process industries — are fully addressed and demonstrated through demos and trials showing that cellular technologies meet their needs. This collaboration aims to ensure that research programs,

such as Horizon Europe and beyond, include dedicated streams and projects for connected industries,” said Afif Osseiran, General Vice Chair of 5G-ACIA.

“Mobile communication is at the heart of the digital transformation that many industries are currently undergoing. It is therefore vital that we collaborate between those developing the next generation of telecommunications and the industrial domains that will be one of the key users of this technology. For this reason, this MoU is important for bringing together the areas of 5G, 6G, Smart Manufacturing and Process Automation”, said Dr. Colin Willcock, Chairman of the Board of the 6G-IA.

Through this cooperation, both associations intend to exchange expertise, coordinate activities in areas of common interest, and contribute to a shared understanding of industrial use cases, requirements, and challenges. The collaboration will also support alignment on standardization, research priorities, and innovation pathways, helping to bridge the transition from current 5G deployments to future 6G systems.

About 5G-ACIA

The 5G Alliance for Connected Industries and Automation (5G-ACIA) is the central global forum for driving and shaping Industrial 5G. 5G-ACIA members jointly prepare for the disruptive transformation that 5G will bring, promote a better understanding of industrial needs, and gain insights into a rapidly expanding emerging market.

5G-ACIA provides a unique platform for OT and ICT companies, academia, and all relevant stakeholders to influence the development and deployment of 5G in line with industrial imperatives. With more than 80 member organizations, 5G-ACIA contributes its work directly to 3GPP - the leading standardization body for 5G worldwide. 5G-ACIA is a working party of ZVEI – German Electro and Digital Industry Association. www.5g-acia.org

About the 6G Smart Networks and Services Industry Association (6G-IA)

The 6G Smart Networks and Services Industry Association (6G-IA) is the voice of European Industry and Research for next-generation networks and services. Its primary objective is to contribute to Europe’s leadership on 5G, 5G evolution and SNS/6G research. The 6G-IA represents the private side in the Smart Networks and Services Joint Undertaking (SNS JU) and the European Commission represents the public side.

The 6G-IA brings together a global industry community of telecoms and digital actors, such as operators, manufacturers, research institutes, universities, verticals, SMEs and ICT associations.

The 6G-IA carries out a wide range of activities in strategic areas including positioning of EU digital technologies priorities, standardization, frequency spectrum, R&D projects,

technology skills, collaboration with key vertical industry sectors, notably for the development of trials, and international cooperation.

Press contacts

5G-ACIA

Ms. Julia Sophia Bachmann

Phone: +49 162 2664905

Email: julia.bachmann@zvei.org

6G-IA

6G-IA Office

Email: office@6g-ia.eu