



## Press release



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# CNES round table on gender equality Towards a collective approach

**Friday 19 June, at the 51<sup>st</sup> International Paris Air Show, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall organized a round table discussion on the theme 'Gender equality: towards a collective approach'.**

Today, women are under-represented in the fields of science and technology, occupying only 17% of engineering posts in France. They find it harder than men to obtain certain highly technical posts or top positions for which they are equally well qualified. Women currently make up 37% of CNES's headcount and occupy 26% of its engineering posts. For this reason, CNES has been focusing since 2004 on improving the gender balance across the agency as part of a concerted policy working with trade unions.

Men and women are now equally represented on CNES's Board of Directors and the agency's Executive Committee has set itself the goal of achieving the same balance as soon as possible. Three particularly ambitious agency-wide agreements have already been signed, the latest in 2013 covering recruitment, equal pay, career promotion and work-life balance.

The speakers at the round table session were Fabienne Casoli, CNES's Deputy Director of Strategy and Programmes; Fiorella Coliolo, as astrophysicist from Women In Aerospace-France; Fatoumata Kebe, a PhD student in astronomy taking part in the 'Space girls, space women' exhibition; Stéphanie Lizy-Destrez, a research scientist and lecturer in design and operation of space systems from the ISAE aeronautics and space institute; Brigitte Rocca, Vice-President of non-profit association Femmes et Science and Emeritus Professor at Paris-Sud University; and Magali Vaissière, Director of Telecommunications and Integrated Applications at ESA. Each detailed their career path and experience, underlining the strong points and areas for improvement in a collective approach to gender equality. ESA astronaut Thomas Pesquet, who is scheduled to make his first flight to the ISS next year, gave his perspective on gender balance in the astronaut corps and took part in the opening of the 'Space girls, space women' exhibition.

After the round table session, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "Gender equality has long been a priority for CNES and we have achieved very good results. However, we must continue to mobilize the efforts of all our partners in schools, universities, non-profit associations and business to pursue this approach together in a constructive, creative and above all fair manner."

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