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French-German space cooperation CNES pays tribute to Jan Wörner and welcomes arrival of Pascale Ehrenfreund

The German space agency DLR put on its traditional start-of-summer picnic in Cologne yesterday. The event, now a fixture of Europe's space calendar, took on special significance this year as it celebrated three events: Jan Wörner's departure from DLR and arrival on 1 July as the new ESA Director General, and the appointment of Pascale Ehrenfreund as the new Chair of DLR.

This year's traditional DLR picnic, with CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall in attendance, was of particularly symbolic importance as it offered the occasion to celebrate three key changes for the future of spacefaring Europe.

Jan Wörner received tributes and thanks from Jean-Yves Le Gall for his eight years at the helm at DLR, which he is now leaving to become the new Director General of ESA. The other change of note celebrated yesterday evening was the arrival of world-renowned astrobiologist Pascale Ehrenfreund to replace him as Chair of DLR's Executive Board.

Jean-Yves Le Gall said: "It is a great honour for me to be with you here this evening to congratulate Jan for everything he has achieved as the head of DLR. It also gives me the opportunity to hail his arrival as the new Director General of ESA, the agency for which he has worked so hard in the past. And I am glad to welcome Pascale Ehrenfreund as the new Chair of DLR. I am sure that our collaboration will be as fruitful as it was with Jan and that together we will achieve great successes in the future to pursue France and Germany's cooperation in space."

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