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68th straight success for Ariane 5

Wednesday 30 September, Ariane 5 completed a flawless launch from Europe's spaceport at the Guiana Space Centre, orbiting two telecommunications satellites: Sky Muster for Australian operator NBN and ARSAT-2 for Argentinian operator ARSAT. The flight marked the European launcher's 68th straight success since 2003.

With a launch mass of 6.4 tonnes, Sky Muster is a telecommunications satellite built by Space Systems Loral (SSL) for Australian operator NBN. It will deliver broadband Internet services to rural and remote regions in Australia and to its coastal islands and certain outlying territories, including the Norfolk, Cocos, Christmas and Macquarie islands, and in Antarctica, to increase the country's participation in the digital economy and help bridge the geographic and generational digital divides. It has an expected service lifetime of over 15 years.

With a launch mass of 3 tonnes, ARSAT-2 is a telecommunications satellite built by Argentinian manufacturer INVAP for ARSAT. It will give Argentina its own independent space telecommunications system, delivering direct-to-home (DTH) television services, Internet access via VSAT antennas, data transmission and IP telephony. It will also offer these services to Canada. It has an expected service lifetime of 15 years.

Commenting on this latest launch success, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall said: "I would like to congratulate everyone involved in accomplishing this latest launch, the 68th straight success for Ariane 5. I would like to thank all of the teams to whom we owe this success, at ESA, Arianespace, across Europe's space industry, at NBN and at ARSAT. I would also like to pay tribute to CNES's teams at the Launch Vehicles Directorate and the Guiana Space Centre for completing this fifth launch for Ariane 5 this year."

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