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CNES in Jerusalem for 66th IAC Jean-Yves Le Gall elected IAF President

The 66th International Astronautical Congress (IAC) in Jerusalem came to a close on Friday 16 October with the election of CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall as the next President of the International Astronautical Federation (IAF), for a three-year term starting in September 2016. This year's congress, a key event in the world space calendar, has been a great success, notably for CNES with numerous agreements signed, high numbers of visitors to its booth and excellent technical presentations by the agency's scientists and engineers. It also gave CNES the opportunity to sign a first Research and Technology agreement with the Israel Space Agency (ISA).

CNES was at the 66th IAC, a key event in the space calendar that it attends every year, which attracted more than 2,000 representatives from the space community, including scientists, academics, space agency officials and industry partners, to Jerusalem, from Monday 12 to Friday 16 October.

In the middle of the exhibition area, CNES's booth symbolized France's presence at IAC, with a giant print of Jerusalem and its outskirts taken by French Earth-observation satellites, mockups of Ariane 5, Pleiades and Jason-3, a film retracing French-Israeli space cooperation and a fresco illustrating CNES's five areas of activity: Ariane, Sciences, Observation, Telecommunications and Defence. The focal point of the exhibition was the French-Israeli VEN μ S mission (Vegetation and Environment monitoring on a New MicroSatellite). VEN μ S aims to observe changes in vegetation at high spatial resolution every two days and pave the way for future Copernicus services, as well as to flight-qualify the Israeli Hall Effect Thruster (IHET). VEN μ S is set to be orbited in the coming months on a Vega launcher from the Guiana Space Centre.

Alongside the exhibition, CNES's experts, closely involved in IAF's committees, took part in many round table discussions and symposia. Their record 14 presentations were highly commended, covering a diverse range of topics including the innovations of the VEN μ S mission, Rosetta, soon set to celebrate the first anniversary of Philae's landing on the core of its target comet, and the de-orbiting of the ATV-5.

Jean-Yves Le Gall also took the opportunity to meet the President and the Director General of ISA to review progress on the VEN μ S programme and sign a first Research and Technology agreement. Named Therme-Ormadd, this agreement will include the development and validation of an environmental sensor combining CNES's Therme experimental sensor that measures ageing of materials in orbit and ISA's Ormadd experimental sensor that measures received doses of ultraviolet radiation and atomic oxygen in real time. This agreement paves the way to explore other areas for cooperation in research and technology.

Lastly, the General Assembly of IAF, held on Friday 16 October, unanimously elected Jean-Yves Le Gall as Incoming President. His three-year term of office will start in September 2016. Jean-Yves Le Gall is currently IAF Vice-President for Industry Relations. Under the new IAF Constitution approved in Toronto in 2014, IAF now elects an Incoming President every three years. After a year as Incoming President, Jean-Yves Le Gall will thus take over as IAF President for a three-year term from 2016 to

2019. The current IAF President is Kiyoshi Higuchi, who was elected in Naples in 2012 and re-elected in Toronto in 2014.

On the announcement of his election, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: “It is a great honour that the IAF General Assembly has done me today in electing me as its President, on the proposal of the European Space Agency (ESA), whom I thank. IAF plays a vital role in the international space arena, bringing together scientists, academics and agency and industry representatives from all over the world. Indeed, IAC is the only event at which all of these stakeholders meet every year to advance our knowledge and help to promote the space sector. I will therefore be very proud to take on this responsibility for the year ahead alongside President Higuchi, whom I commend most highly for his efforts in renewing IAF’s governance and readying it for the challenges that lie ahead, and then for my three-year term of office working with a Bureau and Executive that I think most highly of and for which I have the utmost respect. Lastly, I am especially proud of CNES’s involvement in the success of IAF and this 66th IAC, which organized very constructive debates and exchanges, several thanks to the efforts of our agency’s teams. In this respect, my election also recognizes France’s leading role in the international space arena.”

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