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CNES at opening of University of French Guiana

Wednesday 9 March, in the presence of Thierry Mandon, Secretary of State for Higher Education and Research, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall and Bernard Chemoul, Director of the Guiana Space Centre (CSG), were at the official opening of the University of French Guiana. In its role working to shape education strategies in French Guiana, CNES is a key partner of the new university with a seat on the Board of Administration and the board of the university's IUT technology institute, as well as chairing its academic board. CNES is also part of the GIP FCIP public consortium supporting continuous education and employment.

CNES is aiding the programmes and resources that are working to structure and develop the skills and qualifications of French Guiana's burgeoning young population, offering technical support and funding to local education projects such as digital learning technologies through the digital university, and promoting access to learning for all by developing tele-training across the territory, notably in its western regions.

In this context, CNES is forging local ties through 111 higher education grants, support for the programme to refurbish facilities at the Kourou IUT technology institute, efforts to tackle school drop-out rates and funding for the students' building on the university campus.

CNES is also funding three doctoral research grants at the university for students working on a diverse and promising range of fields: sero-epidemiology to study arboviruses with a view to controlling the spread of dengue, chikungunya and zika in partnership with the Institut Pasteur, the virtues of cocoa and the diversity of trees in the genus *Cecropia*.

At the opening ceremony, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "CNES is proud and honoured to be associated with the opening of the University of French Guiana, a historic and founding event hailed by Thierry Mandon, our Secretary of State for Higher Education and Research, who is here on an official visit and was at the successful launch of Ariane flight 229 yesterday. Working with its partners, CNES is reaffirming its commitment through its active involvement in the governance of this innovative and attractive university geared towards the economic challenges facing French Guiana and its spaceport."

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