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CNES fetes 30th anniversary of its subsidiary CLS in Toulouse

CNES's subsidiary CLS (Collecte Localisation Satellites), the satellite operator and world-leading supplier of satellite-based Earth-observation products and services, yesterday celebrated its 30th anniversary at its facility in Ramonville outside Toulouse. Having nurtured the company since its inception, the agency was also there to mark this event.

In 1986, CNES and Ifremer, the French institute of marine research and exploration, formed CLS to operate and market the Argos system. With the satellite-borne instruments and the Argos transmitters that have since forged its international reputation, which now number more than 20,000 across the globe, CLS enables scientists and nations to explore and continuously keep track of the oceans.

Initially created to study the oceans, the company today offers a comprehensive system dedicated to environmental monitoring, sustainable marine resource management, maritime safety and tracking of single-handed yacht races. From its beginnings as a small firm with just 35 people, CLS is today an international group with 600 employees around the world, working at 23 offices and subsidiaries. It is an innovative company spinning off the space systems devised by CNES and developing applications and services for the benefit of the planet and its populations.

In his speech at the ceremony marking this milestone in Toulouse, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall said: "I am extremely proud to be with you this evening to fete the 30th anniversary of CLS, whose history and development, both closely tied to those of CNES, are to be commended. Alongside the development of international partnerships pursued by CNES, CLS has succeeded in evolving the applications of the Argos system. Since 1996, it has supported CNES's space oceanography activities through its extensive range of satellite altimetry applications and in the 2000s added radar applications to its portfolio. As the world leader in satellite-based Earth observation and value-added services, CLS has become a true operator of satellite systems and is an exceptional success story. Today, it is the flagship of our space industry, driving innovation and applications for CNES."

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