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International space cooperation CNES at the 32nd Space Symposium in Colorado Springs Debate focuses on Mars exploration

CNES is at the 32nd Space Symposium being held Monday 11 to Thursday 14 April in Colorado Springs, United States. Founded in 1984, the Space Symposium is a key event for the international space community and its principal institutional, military, scientific and commercial players. More than 11,000 attendees are at this year's symposium.

The Space Symposium brings together all the big names in space for presentations and expert debates, offering a glimpse of the latest technological developments in the sector and the hottest topics in the industry. It also includes an exhibit centre showcasing the most innovative space technologies and side events and prestigious awards. More than 11,000 attendees and over 100 speakers are at this year's symposium.

CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall spoke at two events:

- The heads of agencies panel discussion, alongside NASA Administrator Charles Bolden, ESA Director General Jan Wörner, Pascale Ehrenfreund from the German space agency DLR, Roberto Battiston, President of the Italian space agency, and others. Responding to a question on priorities in the space sector for the next 10 years, he pointed to three aspects: **inspiration**, as the condition for future generations to continue the space adventure; **innovation**, to meet the challenges posed by NewSpace; and **cooperation**, as CNES is pursuing all of its programmes in collaboration with international partners.
- Journey to Mars, an event organized by NASA, during which he lauded the excellence of the French space and science communities involved in Mars exploration, as illustrated by the joint efforts CNES is already pursuing with NASA, ESA and Roscosmos, and will do in the future with ISRO; in particular, he hailed the success of the ChemCam and SAM instruments on the Curiosity rover and ongoing developments for InSight, Exomars 2018 and Mars 2020.

On the sidelines of the Space Symposium, Jean-Yves Le Gall also found time to meet:

- ASC President Sylvain Laporte to review progress on implementing the letter of intent signed in November 2014 on the occasion of French President François Hollande's state visit to Canada.
- Stephen Volz, NOAA Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services, to discuss Jason-3, Argos, Cospas-Sarsat and CNES's upcoming appearance before the U.S. Congress.
- UKSA Chief Executive Katherine Courtney for a first meeting since she took up the post on 1 April, to discuss French-UK space cooperation.
- KARI President Gwang-Rae Cho to discuss stepping up space cooperation between France and South Korea as part of France-Korea Year.

At the end of his visit to Colorado Springs, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "This year, as in previous years, the Space Symposium was once again 'the place to be'. All the world's leading space officials were here to give us a truly global vision of our sector. In this respect, I have been struck by how CNES's efforts are being lauded, especially what we are doing to support innovation and cooperation. This tribute from the international space community is a great mark of respect for all of our programmes and an extra source of motivation for everyone working at our agency."

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