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France-United States space cooperation

Speech at the Washington Space Business Roundtable

Congressional briefing on the Argos programme

CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall was invited to the Washington Space Business Roundtable on Friday 29 April to give a presentation on France's space strategy. In the morning, he also took part in a briefing on the Argos data location and collection system before the U.S. Congress.

The Washington Space Business Roundtable (WSBR) is a leadership forum that organizes monthly luncheons aimed at developing contacts and networking between key U.S. and international executives and thought leaders in space. The forum supports the open exchange of ideas and information, and gives members the opportunity to ask questions and engage in dialogue with guest speakers.

Jean-Yves Le Gall was the guest speaker on Friday 29 April, when he gave a presentation on France's and Europe's space strategy, and his perspective on the global challenges that lie ahead for the sector. He began by reflecting on the success of the COP 21 climate conference last December in Paris, leading to the signature in New York on 22 April of a Climate Agreement committing 175 nations to action, a momentous event that would have been impossible without the aid of satellites, the platform on which the success of the conference was built and the only way to ensure the commitments made there are met. He also explained how space oceanography, the standard-bearer of French-U.S. space cooperation, has revealed the extent of sea level rise, and underlined the importance of cooperation in tackling climate change, as illustrated by the Mexico and New Delhi Declarations adopted by the world's heads of space agencies.

CNES's President then turned his attention to NewSpace, or to be more precise 'SmartSpace', and the trend towards smaller, more modular, more flexible and more diverse space systems, be it in telecommunications, Earth observation or space science. He summed up this trend by pointing to the fact that in a short time space has become a 'commodity' for many stakeholders, serving an increasingly broad spectrum of applications and creating a new ecosystem that is sustaining jobs and wealth. He then affirmed CNES's position as a pivotal player in the global arena, through its relations with ESA, leading space powers and emerging new players, illustrated perfectly by the agency's new 'Innovation & Inspiration' mantra.

Jean-Yves Le Gall also took advantage of his trip to attend a briefing in the U.S. Congress alongside NOAA, the U.S. Coast Guard and CLS America on the Argos programme and its legacy as a historic symbol of French-U.S. cooperation.

After his speeches at the briefing and luncheon, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "The destinies of France and the United States are once again moving forward together, as shown by our cooperation on the Argos programme and by the challenges we are now facing as we prepare to enter a second space age, the age of climate, SmartSpace and Mars. We can look to the future with hope as we reflect on the great things we have already accomplished in the past with the United States, our main historic partner."

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