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France-Russia space cooperation Opening of exhibition “50 years of French-Russian space cooperation” at the Memorial Museum of Cosmonautics in Moscow

Monday 20 June in Moscow saw the opening of the exhibition on “50 years of French-Russian space cooperation” at the Memorial Museum of Cosmonautics. In attendance at this ceremony were the museum’s Director Natalia Artioukhina, Roscosmos Deputy Head Michail N. Khailov, Frédéric Mondoloni, Minister-Advisor at the French Embassy in Russia, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall and numerous representatives of the Russian space community.

Monday 20 June, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall was in Moscow at the Memorial Museum of Cosmonautics, where he gave a speech opening the exhibition on “50 years of French-Russian space cooperation” alongside his peers and four cosmonauts who have flown space missions on which the two nations have collaborated.

On this occasion, Jean-Yves Le Gall recalled the signature by France and the Soviet Union on 30 June 1966 of a first cooperation agreement on the peaceful uses of outer space, which he underlined as “a visionary political act of international stature making France the Soviet’s Union’s first western partner in space.” France and Russia have since conducted many emblematic programmes together in the fields of science, human spaceflight and launch vehicles, forging true industrial ties in the process, particularly through the European-Russian firm Starsem and the Soyuz launcher operating out of the Guiana Space Centre.

CNES’s President next turned his attention to the future: “France and Russia’s historic cooperation in space is rich, diverse and above all resolutely forward-looking. It will continue to build on our foundation of friendship and shared expertise, and on our strong desire to work together to push the boundaries of industrial and scientific innovation. In the field of science, we have already charted a roadmap for the next 10 years and other areas remain to be explored. This is the focus of discussions I am currently having with my counterpart Igor Komarov, the Head of the Roscosmos federal space agency, and recent successes have confirmed our intention to extend our cooperation further.”

The key elements of the exhibition produced by CNES in partnership with Roscosmos were then presented, in particular a film retracing the highlights and lesser-known moments of 50 years of cooperation, and a bilingual fresco showing the main events of each decade illustrated with archive imagery and a range of artefacts, among them a model of the ELS Soyuz launch complex at the Guiana Space Centre.

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