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ET DE LA RECHERCHE



**Secretary of State
for Higher Education
and Research**

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Press release

Thierry Mandon visits CNES's Launch Vehicles Directorate (DLA)

Presentation of Ariane 6 and Vega-C programmes and their future evolutions

Wednesday 1 June, Thierry Mandon, Secretary of State for Higher Education and Research, visited CNES's Launch Vehicles Directorate (DLA) for a presentation of the Ariane 6 and Vega-C programmes and their future evolutions. The meeting was held in the presence of representatives from CNES, ESA, the German, Italian and Swiss space agencies, Airbus Safran Launchers (ASL) and Arianespace.

Thierry Mandon underlined the need in today's fiercely competitive global market to bring Ariane 6 and Vega-C on stream at the earliest possible opportunity to secure Europe's long-term independent access to space and its position as world number one in the commercial launch services market. He also stressed that efforts to cut the cost of getting to space must be pursued beyond Ariane 6 through a coherent strategy laying the groundwork for the future based on the premise that reusable launchers may one day replace today's expendable vehicles.

At this meeting, Europe's space launch team put forward its strategy for evolving Ariane 6 and Vega-C, underpinned by a new family of very-low-cost engines dubbed Prometheus. These new engines will make extensive use of additive manufacturing technologies and run on hydrocarbon and liquid oxygen. They will be designed from the outset for reuse but will also be able to equip expendable launchers. The goal is to ready a prototype of Prometheus for testing before the end of the decade.

After the meeting, Thierry Mandon commented: "Alongside development of Ariane 6 and Vega-C, Europe must begin laying the groundwork for the future with the new Prometheus family of engines in order to secure its long-term independent launch capability and its position as world leader in the commercial launch services market. Ariane 6 and Vega-C, which will be ready to fly by the end of this decade, are today drawing on the research heritage of the last 20 years and we must set in train now the decisions that will shape their future evolutions."

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