



Press release

France's CNES space agency, Health Directorate and Armed Forces Department of Health sign framework cooperation agreement

Friday 14 October, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall, Benoît Vallet, Head of the French health directorate (DGS), and Jean-Marc Debonne, Head of the armed forces department of health (SSA), signed a framework cooperation agreement at CNES's Head Office. The agreement is part of the e-Health 2020 roadmap announced by France's social affairs and health minister on 4 July 2016. It seeks to exploit the three organizations' expertise to ensure effective healthcare provision.

Space technologies are helping not only to modernize how the health system operates and is organized, but also to conceive totally new ways of working. To tap into the potential of digital technologies to drive such major opportunities, the three partners are joining forces through this agreement to give a bigger role to space technologies in the provision of healthcare, with CNES offering space solutions, DGS its public health management expertise and SSA its extensive operational experience.

At today's meeting to sign the agreement, several areas for cooperation were identified, among them tele-epidemiology (to monitor risk zones and track epidemics), crisis management, telemedicine and space medicine, the latter for the advances it is underpinning in technologies, fundamental and applied research, with spin-offs into public health.

Under the agreement, the parties will exchange information on national, European and international space programmes and how they could be applied to modernize the health system and enhance its efficiency. A steering committee chaired by a representative of CNES and a representative from SSA or DGS will meet once a year and be tasked with putting forward and processing new projects, and with tracking and assessing joint projects.

The three partners also discussed other potential areas to be explored. Satellite geolocation, for example, already widely used in consumer applications, could greatly benefit healthcare professionals, notably for partially-sighted persons and Alzheimer disease persons. Satellite telecommunications could also prove highly valuable in ensuring access to healthcare services for all.

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