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France-China space cooperation 11th meeting of French-Chinese Space Committee Signature of cooperation agreement on HY-2 ocean-observing missions

Tuesday 23 May in Paris, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall and Wu Yanhua, Vice-Administrator of the China National Space Administration, chaired the 11th meeting of the French-Chinese Space Committee. On this occasion, they discussed space cooperation between the two nations, reviewed progress on their flagship joint programmes CFOSat and SVOM, and signed a cooperation agreement on the HY-2 ocean-observing missions.

The 11th meeting of the French-Chinese Space Committee since the signature of the intergovernmental accord of 1997 confirmed the close cooperative ties the two nations have forged in space, driven by the five working groups focused on Earth Science, Space Science, Life Science, Lunar and Deep Space Exploration and Climate Change, which were presented to CNES and CNSA management teams.

Jean-Yves Le Gall and Wu Yanhua also noted with satisfaction the progress of the CFOSat mission scheduled to launch in 2018, dedicated to scientific observation of the oceans and the study of surface wind and wave conditions, and the SVOM mission planned to launch in 2021 to observe and characterize gamma-ray bursts. These two projects being pursued through the strategic French-Chinese dialogue reflect the dynamic nature of the two nations' scientific cooperation.

CNES and CNSA are also working together on the HY-2 missions to study the medium-scale ocean circulation, to observe ocean dynamics and sea state, and to enable operational ocean forecasting and oceanography research. The new agreement signed today extends the space oceanography agreement signed in 2010 and renewed in 2015, through which the two agencies have already collaborated successfully on the HY-2A mission launched in 2011.

Wrapping up the Space Committee meeting, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "With oceans becoming for the first time a key focus of climate negotiations at the COP21, I am delighted to see cooperation in space oceanography between France and China proving so successful. This success is illustrated by the agreement we signed today that will enable CNES to incorporate data from the HY-2 satellites into the French system, which already holds a wealth of satellite altimetry data, and to make them available to the main operational oceanography and climate prediction centres around the world."

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