

Press Release

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CNES at 'Prospects for Space in 2018' seminar

Wednesday 6 December, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall took part in the 'Prospects for Space in 2018' seminar organized by Euroconsult and GIFAS, the French aerospace industries association. Frédérique Vidal, Minister for Higher Education, Research and Innovation, had previously opened the seminar and ESA Director General Jan Wörner had given an address about the stakes and outlook for Europe's space programme in the years ahead.

CNES's President began by recalling France's expertise in space. Since its inception in 1961, CNES is tasked with shaping and executing the French government's space policy. With the second largest per-capita civil space budget in the world after the United States, France is the prime mover behind Europe's space programme and the main contributor to ESA. As a new world space order takes shape around emerging new agencies and a burgeoning private sector, CNES is continuing to forge international partnership ties to invent the space systems of the future, nurture new services and extend exploration of the universe.

The Callisto and Prometheus launchers and engines of the future, the Microscope science mission, the MERLIN and MicroCarb climate-monitoring satellites and the European Galileo geolocation programme are just a few examples of how CNES is driving disruptive innovations in its five areas of focus: Ariane, science, Earth observation, telecommunications and defence. By creating entrepreneurial ecosystems and supporting the development of start-ups, the agency is fulfilling its role fuelling innovation for jobs.

In seeking to invent the future of space, CNES is a key link in the chain of technological innovation, economic development and France's industrial policy. The agency has some 2,500 employees at its four centres of excellence: Head Office in Paris, the Toulouse Space Centre, the Launch Vehicles Directorate in Paris and the Guiana Space Centre, Europe's spaceport in Kourou. 80% of CNES's budget goes towards French industry and 40% of Europe's space industry is based in France. Space sustains 16,000 jobs in metropolitan France and 9,000 direct and indirect jobs in French Guiana, 15% of the local working population.

On the occasion of this seminar, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "Focusing on the three structural challenges of innovation, climate and exploration, CNES is working with the most innovative technologies and almost all stakeholders in space. Serving society through the development of applications, serving the planet by leading climate actions and serving science through missions to constantly gain new knowledge, it is a jewel in the crown of French and European research, whose expertise is world-renowned."

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