

Press Release

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New Year wishes at the Guiana Space Centre Thomas Pesquet guest of honour

Thursday 11 January in Cayenne, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall and Didier Faivre, Director of the Guiana Space Centre (CSG), presented the agency's traditional New Year wishes to members of parliament, institutional and socio-professional representatives, town councillors and government officials. They also paid tribute to the centre's teams for another record year during which 11 launches were accomplished from the base and Ariane 5's straight run of successes was extended to 82 flights.

Jean-Yves Le Gall thanked and congratulated all of those who contributed throughout the year to the achievements of the CSG, starting with the employees of CNES in the agency's roles as launch base operator, investor and developer. He underlined the 11 launches completed in 2017 and in particular the milestone 82nd launch of Ariane 5 lofting the 19th, 20th, 21st and 22nd satellites of the Galileo constellation into orbit.

CNES's President then pointed to CNES's role in support of local development. He emphasized the strong support afforded to the CSG by President Emmanuel Macron and his government in pursuit of the strategic and political priorities set with the French Guiana regional authority (CTG) under the French Guiana regional development plan, and more recently through the plan announced at the end of last year by the Ministers for Overseas Territories and Higher Education to support education, development and land planning, and the tourist attractions operated under CNES's responsibility.

Lastly, he mentioned the 50th anniversary of the inauguration of the CSG, which in April 1968 launched the first Veronique sounding rocket, taking the opportunity to underline that French Guiana is dependent on the space industry's 4,700 direct and indirect jobs, representing 15% of its GDP, just as the space industry is dependent on French Guiana with its ideal equatorial location. CNES and French Guiana have sustained this win-win relationship over the last 50 years, supporting Europe's independent space launch capability and bringing people from all over the world to French Guiana.

At the end of the gathering, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "The Guiana Space Centre, Europe's spaceport, is one of the world's top-performing launch bases and I want to personally thank each and every one of you here to whom we owe the record results achieved in 2017. New challenges await us over the year ahead, for which your dedication and motivation will once again prove crucially important. I would also like to most warmly thank the Préfet and government agencies, institutional stakeholders and local authorities, and all of the manufacturers and firms involved, without whom such successes would be impossible. In 2018, CNES will be pursuing the spirit of space, but tonight it is the spirit of French Guiana that is foremost in our minds!"

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